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Meditations from St. Chrysostom

ROBERT KING A.B

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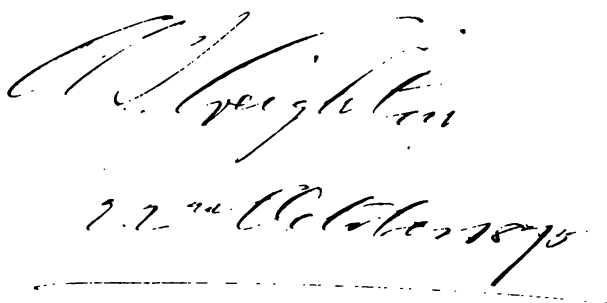


Meditations

from

St. Chrysostom,

on the

Study of the Word of God,

Consisting of Passages literally translated from his Works,

with references to vol., page, &c.

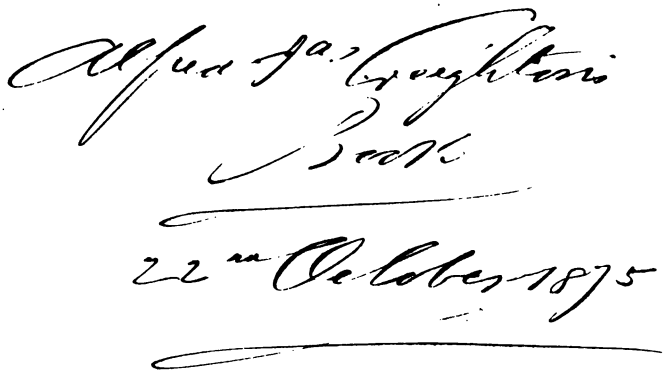
BY ROBERT KING, A.B.

SECOND EDITION—MUCH ENLARGED.

Dublin:

George Herbert, Grafton-street.

1853.



"And shall I raise my voice again?—again attempt to speak? 'And what use were there in it?' Nay, but there will be use. What though all do not hear me, the half will. And if not even half will hear me, a third will. And if not even a third, a fourth. And if not even a fourth, still ten will. And if not even ten, five. And if not even five, one. And if not even one, yet have I my reward secured. *The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but* THE WORD OF GOD SHALL STAND FOR EVER."—*Sermon of St. Chrysostom on the Arrest of Eutropius.* *See p.* 105, *of this book.*

J. CHARLES, Printer, 61, Middle Abbey-street.

PREFACE.

THE passages of St. Chrysostom's writings which appear in the following pages, are all translated from the valuable Edition of his Works in thirteen volumes, folio, published by the Benedictine Monks of Paris, between A.D. 1718, and A.D. 1738; in which they may easily be found, by the references given with each extract. Such a style of rendering has been adopted throughout, as appeared, *with least deviation from the literal*, best suited to preserve the meaning of the original, and at the same time to give the translation a suffciently smooth and intelligible form for the English reader.

In making the selections, it has been arranged that each No. should consist of a single portion, *taken whole*, from the part of the *Works* in which it occurs. In one case only, (No. XVI.) *two* such portions occur. But for this rule, a few passages, here and there, in these extracts, might have been as well omitted. It was, however, thought preferable, even at the cost of retaining a small portion of what was of a less judicious or instructive character, to avoid any thing that might wear the appearance of supplying the extracts in a garbled condition.

It cannot but interest those who labour, at this day, in the face of many most unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, objections and impediments, to promote the free circulation of God's Holy Word, among all classes of persons, to find how very anxiously so eminent and highly esteemed a Father of the Church, as St. Chrysostom, had his heart set on the same object,—how little sympathy he had with that spirit, which represents them as dangerous for any,—how repeatedly he urges the absolute necessity of their use for all,—how earnestly he insists on the statement, that where ignorance of them exists, there, by all means, may we expect heresy to be found,—how strongly he recommends the constant perusal of them, by the ignorant,

as well as the highly educated,—by the private layman, as well as by the studious ecclesiastic,—at home in the cottage, as well as in the Church,—how great he represents the advantages of the study to be, what a consolation in affliction, what a support under the weight of oppressive cares;—and, in fine, how simply he disposes of some of those objections, which people anxious to discourage the study have thought it worth their while to repeat, even to our own day, against the value of the free and unrestrained use of the Holy Bible.

And besides the objections which are more directly met in these pages, there is another specious and somewhat ingenious one, of more recent date, to which also, by anticipation, he furnishes a reply. It has been often said, by men disparaging the value of the Sacred Scriptures, 'If they be of such importance to our eternal interests, how then could people be saved at all, before printing was invented? How could men possibly all have Bibles in the old times, when manuscripts were more costly than gold and precious stones? Chrysostom gives us plainly to understand that he thought far otherwise; that in his opinion, if men were unsupplied, they were to be blamed: and that, had they a sufficient interest in the object, all, even the poorest, might, by a little exertion, have been furnished with the Sacred Word.—But it was no wonder if, when men ceased to attach a due value to the contents of the Bible, copies became scarce, and then, as a necessary consequence, of costly price.

The writings of St. Chrysostom, valuable as they are, contain many statements from which a judicious and well instructed Christian will feel obliged to withold his assent. Even in the portion of them contained in the following pages, some features may perhaps be observed by such a one, less likely to commend themselves to his favorable judgment, than the tendency and aim of the compilation as a whole.—But whatever faults of such a kind may be noticed in these extracts, it is hoped that they will be regarded as of small consequence, compared with the general doctrine maintained in them throughout, which is surely '*godly and wholesome*', and no less, '*necessary for these times*'.

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ERRATA.

p. 29, l. 3 from end, for 'terrents' read 'torrents.'
p. 32, l. 17, for 'circumstance' read 'circumstances.'
p. 41, No. V. Heading, for 'Homily II.' read 'Homily XI.'
p. 53, l. 8, after 'have' insert 'to.'

LIFE OF

St. John Chrysostom,

ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE, AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH. A.D. 407.

(Abridged from Butler's "Lives of the Saints," retaining the words of the Original.)

THIS incomparable doctor, on account of the fluency and sweetness of his eloquence, obtained soon after his death, the surname of Chrysostom, or Golden-mouth, which we find given him by St. Ephrem of Antioch, Theodoret, and Cassiodorus. But his tender piety and undaunted courage and zeal in the cause of virtue, are titles far more glorious, by which he holds an eminent place among the greatest pastors and saints of the Church. About the year 344, Antioch, the capital city of the East, was, according to F. Stilting, ennobled by his illustrious birth. He had one elder sister, and was the only son and heir of Secundus, Master of the Horse, that is, Chief Commander of the imperial troops in Syria. His mother, Anthusa, left a widow at twenty years of age, continued such the remainder of her life, dividing her time between the care of her family and

the exercises of devotion. She managed the estate of her children with great prudence and frugality, knowing this to be part of her duty to God, but she was sensible that their spiritual instruction in virtue was of infinitely greater importance. From their cradle she instilled into them the most perfect maxims of piety and contempt of the world; and for her son provided the ablest masters in every branch of literature, which the empire at that time afforded. Eloquence was esteemed the highest accomplishment, especially among the nobility, and was the surest means of raising men to the first dignities of the state. John studied that art under Libanius, the most famous orator of that age, and such was his proficiency, that even in his youth he excelled his masters. Libanius being asked by his Pagan friends on his death-bed, about the year 390, who should succeed him in his school, "John," said he, "had not the Christians stolen him from us." Our saint was then priest. The progress of the young scholar in philosophy was no less rapid and surprising; his genius shone in every disputation. All this time his principal care was to study Christ, and to learn his spirit: and his modesty, meekness, tender charity, and singular discretion, rendered him the delight of all he conversed with.

The first dignities of the empire were open to John. But his principal desire was to dedicate himself to God, without reserve. However, not

being yet twenty years of age, he for some time pleaded at the bar. In that employment he was drawn by company into the diversions of the world, and sometimes assisted at the entertainments of the stage. His virtue was in imminent danger of splitting against that fatal rock, when God opened his eyes. He was struck with horror at the sight of the precipice upon the brink of which he stood; and not content to flee from it himself, he never ceased to bewail his blindness, and took every occasion to caution the faithful against that lurking place of hellish sirens, but more particularly in his vehement sermons against the stage. The clamours of his old friends and admirers who were incensed at his leaving them, and pursued him with their invectives and censures, were as arrows shot at random. John took no manner of notice of them: he rejoiced in contempt, and despised the frowns of a world whose flatteries he dreaded: Christ crucified was the only object of his heart, and nothing could make him look back after he had put his hand to the plough.

He was ordained deacon by St. Meletius, bishop of Antioch, in A.D. 381, and priest by Flavian, in 386, who at the same time constituted him his vicar and preacher, our saint being then in the 43rd year of his age. He discharged all the duties of that arduous station during twelve years, being the hand and the eye of his bishop, and his mouth to his flock.

The instruction and care of the poor he regarded as his first obligation; this he always made his favorite employment and delight. Antioch, he supposes, contained at that time one hundred thousand Christian souls: all these he fed with the Word of God, preaching several days in the week, and frequently several times on the same day.

St. Chrysostom had been five years deacon, and twelve years priest, when Nectarius, bishop of Constantinople, dying in 397, the Emperor Arcadius, at the suggestion of Eutropius, his chamberlain, resolved to procure the election of our saint to the patriarchate of that city. Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, a man of a proud and turbulent spirit, was come thither to recommend a creature of his own to that dignity. He endeavoured by illegal practices to traverse the canonical promotion of our saint; but was detected and threatened to be accused in a synod. Whereupon he was glad to desist from his intrigues, and thus John was consecrated by him on the 26th of February, in 398. In regulating his own conduct and his domestic concerns, he retrenched all the great expenses which his predecessors had entailed on their dignity, which he looked upon as superfluous; and these sums he applied to the relief of the poor, especially of the sick. He repressed the wicked custom of swearing, first at Antioch, and then at Constantinople, and represented to the people how false and absurd their

excuse is in saying, they mean no harm. His diocese, nay the whole world, he considered as a great hospital of souls, spiritually blind, deaf, sick, and in danger of perishing eternally; many standing on the brink, many daily falling from the precipice into the unquenchable lake: and he was indefatigable in tears and supplications to the Father of Mercies for their salvation, and in labours and in every endeavour to open their eyes.

It remained that our saint should glorify God by his sufferings, as he had already done by his labours. He had preached a sermon against the extravagance and pomp of women in their dress. This was pretended by some to have been levelled at the Empress: and they also accused him to the Emperor of having called her Jezebel, a false assertion, as Palladius testifies. Zosimus, a heathen historian, says, that her flagrant avarice, her extortions and injustices, knew no bounds, and that the court was filled with informers, calumniators, and harpies, who being always on the watch for prey, found means to seize the estates of such as died rich, and to disinherit their children or other heirs. No wonder that a saint should displease such a court while he discharged his duty to God. The Emperor issued an order for his banishment, but the execution of it was opposed by the people, who assembled about the great church to guard their pastor. He made them a farewell sermon, in which he spoke as fol-

lows: "Violent storms encompass me on all sides; yet I am without fear, because I stand upon a rock. Though the sea roar and the waves rise high, they cannot sink the vessel of Jesus. I fear not death, which is my gain: nor banishment, for the whole earth is the Lord's: nor the loss of goods, for I came naked into the world, and must leave it in the same condition. I despise all the terrors of the world, and trample upon its smiles and favour. Nor do I desire to live unless for your service. Christ is with me: whom shall I fear? though waves rise against me: though the fury of princes threaten me, all these are to me more contemptible than a spider's web. I always say: O Lord, may thy will be done: not what this or that creature wills, but what it shall please thee to appoint, that shall I do and suffer with joy. This is my strong tower: this is my unshaken rock: this is my staff that can never fail. If God be pleased that it be done, let it be so. Wheresoever his will is that I be, I return him thanks."

St. Chrysostom s banishment was contrived in 403, and his troubles continued to 407. The effect of them was such as to weaken and injure his health until his enfeebled constitution could hold out no longer, and his release was brought at last by sickness caused by the hardships which he endured. He died on September 14, 407. His last words were, Glory be to God for all things. Amen.

We are told that before his ordination, in 374, he retired into the mountains near Antioch, among certain holy anchorets who peopled them, and whose manner of life is thus described. They devoted all the morning to prayer, and meditating on the Holy Scriptures. Their food was bread with a little salt: some added oil, and those who were very weak a few herbs or pulse: no one ever eat before sunset. They always closed their midnight prayers with the remembrance of the last judgment, to excite themselves to a constant watchfulness and preparation. No one possessed anything as his own: even their poor necessaries were all in common. On the poor and in hospitality to strangers they spent all the spare profits of their work.

They rose at midnight, and after the morning psalms and hymns, all remained in their private cell, where they read the Holy Scriptures, and some copied books. They made baskets, tilled and watered the earth, hewed wood, attended the kitchen, washed the feet of strangers, and attended on them without distinction whether they were rich or poor. Underneath is the form of thanksgiving which they used after their evening meal, as given by St. Chrysostom in his 56th Homily upon the Gospel of St. Matthew.—*Opp. Tom.* vii. p. 561.

FORM OF THANKSGIVING

AFTER MEAT,

USED BY THE ANCIENT ANCHORETS.

"O Blessed God, who has fed me from my youth up, who givest food unto all flesh; fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that we always having all sufficiency, may abound unto every good work, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom together with

the Holy Ghost, be glory, honour, and power unto Thee, for ever and ever. Amen.

"Glory be to Thee O Lord, glory be to Thee O Holy One, glory be to Thee O King, because Thou hast given us food to gladden us: fill us with Thy Holy Spirit, that we may be found acceptable in Thy sight, and not be ashamed when Thou shalt render to every man according to his works."

A Prayer

OF

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM,

WHEN YOU ARE GOING TO READ, OR HEAR ANOTHER READ, GOD'S HOLY WORD.— *Opp. Tom, xii. p.* 799.

O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, open Thou the ears and eyes of my heart, that I may hear Thy words, and understand and follow Thy commandments, for I am a stranger, O Lord, upon the earth. O hide not Thou Thy commandments from me, but open mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law; for in Thee is my trust, O God, that Thou mayest enlighten my heart.

SELECT

PORTIONS OF SERMONS

BY

St. John Chrysostom,

ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE;

A.D. 398.

No. I.

BEING THE FORMER PORTION OF HIS THIRD HOMILY ON THE PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.— *Opp. Tom.* 1 *p.* 736. *Ed. Bened. Paris,* 1718.

THE parable about Lazarus has afforded us, both rich and poor, no ordinary benefit,; for it has taught the one class to bear their poverty with contentment, and has shewn the others that they must not be proud of their riches: nay, further, it has proved to us, from the real circumstances of the case, that the most miserable of all men is he who lives in the enjoyment of luxury, and will share it with none besides. Now then, let us handle the same subject once more to-day: for they who are employed in mines, wherever they see many veins of gold, dig there again, and never leave off, until they have extracted all that they can find. Return we then to the point at which we ended our discourse on a former occasion,

to resume the subject at the same place again. It were possible, indeed, to have expounded this whole parable to you in a single day: but our object is not to have a great deal spoken, before leaving this place, but rather that you should take in accurately, and secure possession of, what is said; that by retaining it in this way, you may receive some spiritual improvement. For when the fond mother wishes to bring her suckling child to the use of solid food, if she pour much together into its mouth, she gains nothing by it, when the little one sputters out what is given it, and wets the pinafore upon its bosom: but if she pour gently and by degrees, it swallows the food given without any trouble. Now in order that you too may not reject what is given you, we have not inclined the cup of doctrine to you too hastily, but have divided our matter into portions for several days, affording you in these intervening days an opportunity of resting after what you have heard, that the truths communicated to you may be safely laid up in the storehouse of your affections, and that you may receive what is afterwards to be said with a fresh and vigorous spirit. For this purpose too it is, that we frequently tell you, many days before, the subject of the discourses that are to be delivered, that in the days between, you may take the Book, and read the entire passage, and observe what is expressed, and what is understood, so as to have your mind

better prepared for hearing what is to be spoken after. And this is what I am always advising you, and will never cease advising you, to do, namely, not merely to give your attention to what is said here, but also, when you are at home, to be constantly occupied with the reading of the Divine Scriptures. This moreover is what I have never omitted to urge upon those that have conversed with me in private. For let no one address me in that frigid language, (language that deserves to be strongly condemned,) saying, "I am tied to the court-house, I have city business to attend to, I have to look after my trade, I have a wife, I am rearing up children, I am head of a family, I am a man of the world: it is not my business to be reading the Scriptures: *that* belongs rather to them who have bid farewell to the world, who have settled on mountain tops, who spend this kind of life continually." What say you, my friend? Is it no business of yours to give attention to the Scriptures, because you are distracted with a thousand cares? Yours then, indeed, it is, more than theirs.*

* The first anchorets were driven to the deserts *to escape from persecution*: and some of them became so much attached to the sequestered life they so led, and the quiet it afforded to religious persons, as to be unwilling to relinquish its attractions when the persecution abated; thinking that it furnished them with better facilities for walking faithfully with God than a more ordinary sort of life. Of such persons, Chrysostom says, that they, if any, had less need than other people, of constant reading of the Scriptures. It were, however, safer to say, that if any need constant refreshment and repeated counsels from the Word of God *more* than others, it is they who are most in the way of the temptations of the world from constant intercourse with it. A rural life certainly exposes many to less pressure of temptations than one spent in a city, as any

For they are not so much in need of assistance from the Divine Scriptures, as persons who move in the thick of urgent business. For the monks who have separated themselves from public life, and the troubles connected with it, and have fixed their abodes in the desert, and have no intercourse with any one, but meditate with security in the calm of that tranquility,—they, lying, as it were, in port, enjoy considerable safety; but we who are tossed, as it were, on the open sea, and are subject to the compulsion of sins unnumbered, are ever continually and perpetually in want of consolation from the Scriptures. They sit far from the battle, wherefore they receive not many wounds; but you stand continually in the forefront of the fight, and are constantly receiving strokes, so that you have the more need of medical aid. For there is the wife provoking, and a son giving trouble, and a servant exciting one to passion, and an enemy plotting, and an acquaintance envying, and a neighbour harassing, and a fellow-soldier tripping one up; and often too, a judge threatening, and poverty pinching, and loss of friends to afflict one; and prosperity elates, and adversity depresses. And there are many circumstances to furnish inevitable occasions of anger,

person who has compared the two, may readily admit. Chrysostom evidently did not think the laity less in need than the clergy of acquaintance with the contents of God's Holy Word, as a means of regulating their daily walk in life, so as that it should be happy for themselves, and pleasing to Him.

many causes of anxiety, many of despondency and grief, many of vain-glory and foolish thoughts, occurring around us on every side: a thousand darts are passing in every direction. There is therefore constant need of the whole armour derived from the Scriptures. "For know," [saith a certain writer,] "that thou walkest in the midst of snares, and art treading on the battlements of the city." For the lusts of the flesh attack more fiercely those who live in the midst of society: where the comely face and graceful person inflict wounds through the eyes; and the lustful expression entering by the hearing, disturbs our understanding, and often too the cunning melody unsettles the sobriety of one's spirit. But why mention these things? Seeing that what is often thought more insignificant than any of them, the very breath of the sweet odours of immodest women, has by simple casual meeting, led away captive its victim.

And many such things there be that wage war upon our souls: so that we have need of the divine remedies, both to heal the wounds already gotten, and to ward off those not yet gotten, but that are in danger of befalling us; that we may extinguish from a distance the darts of the devil, and beat them off by constant reading of the Divine Scriptures. For it is impossible, it is impossible, for any man to be saved, who does not continually enjoy spiritual reading; and we must really be content, if

even with constant enjoying of this treatment, we may so, by any means, be saved. But when we are receiving wounds every day, and have no medical aid, what hope can there be of safety?

See you not the workers in brass—the goldsmith,—the silversmith,—the trades-people of any class, how they keep all the implements of their trade safe and ready for use: even though hunger press them,—even though poverty afflict them,—still they prefer to endure all hardships rather than part with any of the instruments of their profession, and live by the sale of it: many, certainly, have chosen rather to borrow for the support of their family and children, than to give up even the smallest of the tools of their trade. And very naturally, for they know, that if those be sold, every thing that concerns their trade becomes useless to them, and all the source of their gains is taken away. For while they retain those implements, it is possible for them at length to liquidate, in the course of time, the debts they are liable to, by constant working at their trades; but if, in the first instance, they were to give those implements away to others, they should not be able afterwards to contrive any means at all of relieving their poverty and hunger. And such too should be our disposition. For just as the implements of *their* trades are the hammer, and anvil, and pincers, exactly so, the implements of our profession are, the books of the Apostles and Pro-

phets, and all the Scripture, composed by Divine Inspiration, and full of what is for our profit.

And as these persons of whom we speak fashion with those implements whatever vessels they take in hand, just so we, by means of these of ours, labour at our own souls, and correct what is injured, and repair what is worn out with age. But they can exhibit the power of their art only on the forms of things; for they cannot change the material of the vessels, nor make gold out of silver; but are able to alter the structure only. But not so are you; for you can go a step farther than they; you shall be able to take up a vessel of wood, and after some time to make it into gold. And Paul is my witness for this, when he speaks thus, *But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth. If, therefore, a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and made ready for every good work.* Let us not then neglect the attainment of the Bible, lest we receive a wound in our vital parts. Nor let us bury our gold, but rather treasure up for ourselves those spiritual books. For gold, when most abundant, is most dangerous to the possessor: but the books, where securely stored up, afford much advantage to those that have them.

For just as, where the ornaments of royalty are treasured up, even if there be no person that uses

them, they yet afford a considerable protection to those resident there, no thieves nor robbers, nor any other ill-minded person, daring to attack the place; just so, wherever there be spiritual books, [i.e. the books of the Inspired Bible,] all the influence of the devil is repulsed from that place, and much encouragement to virtue is given to those that dwell there,—for the very sight of the Bible of itself makes us more slow to sin. For whether we venture upon anything forbidden, and so incur defilement,—on returning home, and casting our eye upon the Bible, we are led severely to condemn ourselves in our own consciences, and become slower to repeat the same sin. Or if, again, we persevere in holiness,—we receive thence yet further advancement. For as soon as any one comes in contact with the Gospel, he straightway changes the course of his own thoughts, and diverts his attention from worldly things at the very sight of it. But if there be further added attentive study of the book, the soul, breathing, as it were, in the inmost sanctuary, is thus purified and becomes better, God conversing with it through the means of those Scriptures.

"What, then," says some one, "if we do not understand the contents?" Undoubtedly, even if you do not understand the contents, much improvement in holiness accrues from the very reading of them. But further, it is impossible for you to be

alike ignorant of all:—for it was for this reason that the grace of the Spirit appointed that publicans, and fishermen, and tentmakers, and shepherds, and goatherds, and unlearned and ignorant men, should compose these books, that none of the unlearned might be able to have recourse to this excuse; that the words there spoken might be intelligible to all; that even the mechanic, and the servant, and the widow woman, and the most unlearned of all mankind, might receive profit and improvement from what they should hear.

For it was not for vain glory, like the heathen, but for the salvation of the hearers, that those Authors, who from the beginning, were counted worthy of the grace of the Spirit, composed all these writings. For the heathen philosophers, indeed, and their orators and writers, not seeking the common welfare, but aiming only at their own aggrandizement, if ever they did say anything useful, did, in their usual obscurity, conceal even this in a sort of dark mist, as it were. But the apostles and prophets did quite the reverse; for what proceeded from them they set before all men plain and clear, as being the common teachers of the world, that each individual might be able, even of himself, to learn from the mere reading, the sense of what they said. And foretelling this, the prophet exclaimed, *They shall be all taught of God. And they shall not say every man to his neighbour, Know the Lord, for all*

shall know me, from the least of them unto the greatest. And Paul saith, *And I, brethren, came to you, not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the mystery of God.* And again, *My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power.* And again, *For we*, saith he, *speak not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.*

And who is there that does not understand plainly the whole of the gospels? Who, that hears that, *Blessed are the meek, Blessed are the merciful, Blessed are the pure in heart*, and so forth, will need a teacher in order to comprehend any of these sayings? And as for the accounts of miracles and wonderful works, and historical facts, are they not plain and intelligible to any common person? This is but pretext and excuse, and a cloak for laziness. You "do not understand the contents." And how will you ever be able to understand them, when you will not so much as take a single glance at them? Take the book in your hands, read the entire history, and when you have secured a knowledge of what is simple, come back to the obscure and hard parts over and over again. And if you cannot by constant reading make out what is said, go to some person wiser than yourself, go to a teacher, communicate with him about the things spoken of, shew a strong interest in the matter. And if God see you

displaying so much anxiety, he will not despise your watchfulness and earnestness: but even if no man teach you what you seek after, Himself will surely reveal it.

Remember the Eunuch of the Queen of the Ethiopians, who though a barbarian by birth, and pressed by innumerable cares, and surrounded on every side by many things to occupy his attention, aye, and unable, moreover, to understand what he was reading, was reading nevertheless, as he sat in his chariot. And if he shewed such diligence upon the road, consider what he must have been when staying at home. If he could not endure to let the time of his journey pass without reading, much more would he attend to it when sitting in the house. If, when he understood nothing of what he was reading, he still would not give up reading, much less would he after he had learned. For in proof that he did not understand what he was reading, hear what Philip saith to him, *Understandest thou what thou art reading?* And he, upon hearing this, did not blush, nor feel ashamed, but confessed his ignorance, and says, *For how can I, unless some man should guide me?* Since, then, when he had not yet a guide, he was occupied even so, in reading, he therefore speedily met with one to take him by the hand. God saw his earnestness, accepted his diligence, and straightway sent him a teacher.

"But there is no Philip here now."—Aye, but the

Spirit that influenced Philip is here. Let us not trifle, beloved, with our salvation. *All these things were written for our sakes, for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* Great is the security against sin which the reading of the Scriptures furnishes:—great is the precipice, and deep the gulf, that opens before ignorance of the Scriptures. It is downright abandonment of Salvation to be ignorant of the Divine laws. It is this that has caused heresies: it is this that has led to profligate living: it is this that has turned things upside down. For it is impossible, impossible, for any one to come off without profit, who constantly enjoys such reading with intelligence. See for instance, a single parable, how much profit it has afforded to us,—how it has improved our souls. For there be many, I well know, who have left this place much profited by what they heard. And if there be some, who have reaped not so much fruit, yet even for the day on which they heard the Word, they were surely the better of it; and it is no small advantage to spend even a single day in contrition for sin, and to raise one's thoughts to meditate on things above, and permit the soul even for a little time to refresh itself after the cares of the world. For if we were to do this upon every occasion of our coming together, and not cease to do so, the constant hearing would be sure to work in us great and valuable good.

Now, then, let us bring before you the following

part of this parable—And what is it then that follows? When the rich man said, *Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue:* let us hear what was Abraham's reply, *Son remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things*, &c. &c.

No. II.

THE INTRODUCTORY PORTION OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S THIRD HOMILY ON THE BEGINNING OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.—*Tom III. p.* 71.

WHEN I reflect on my own poverty of intellect, I feel chilled, and shrink at the thought of being called upon to address so large an assemblage of people; but when I turn my attention to your readiness of mind, and insatiable eagerness for hearing, I take courage and am aroused, and prepare myself with ready mind for the teacher's office. For, exhibiting such an ardent anxiety and interest about what you hear as you do, you might well give buoyancy to an intellect of stone, and make it lighter than any feather. And as those animals that remain in their dens during the cold of winter, and conceal themselves in rocky caverns, as soon as they see the warm weather again appearing, leave their hiding places, and resume their positions amongst the rest of the animal creation, exhibiting the same lively

vigour with ourselves; even so our spirit, retiring as it were to the covert of conscious weakness, as soon as it beholds the warmth of your affection, leaves that covert, and takes its place among you; with you it bounds through the fair pastures of the sacred writings, in the spiritual and heavenly meadow, the paradise of Scripture.

For the reading of the Divine Scriptures is in truth a spiritual meadow, and a paradise of delights; yea, a paradise of delights better than paradise itself. This paradise God hath planted, not upon the earth, but in the souls of believers; this paradise He hath not established in Eden, nor towards the East, limited by the boundaries of one locality, but He has expanded it all over the earth, and extended it to the bounds of the world. And that you may know that He hath so sent forth the Scriptures to spread everywhere through the world, hear what saith the prophet: *Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.* For whether you travel to the Indians, the first people whom the rising sun illuminates, or if you journey away to the Ocean, and those British Islands there, or if you take your voyage to the Euxine Sea, or if you journey to the Southern climes, you shall hear all persons everywhere conversing seriously on subjects from the Scriptures,—with another voice indeed, yet not with another faith, and with a different tongue indeed, but with accordant feelings;

for the sound of the language varies, but the system of religion is unvarying: and the men are barbarians in tongue, but philosophers in heart; and unpolished in accent, yet religious in their life.

See you the extent of this paradise, stretching to the borders of the world? And there is no serpent here; the place is one free from noxious animals, and securely walled in by the Spirit's gracious influence. This paradise has its fountain too, as had that paradise of old; a fountain, the parent, not of four, but of ten thousand rivers. For this fountain gives rise, not to a Tigris, nor Euphrates, nor Egyptian Nile, nor Indian Ganges, but to unnumbered streams. Who is it that affirms this? God himself, who bestowed upon us those rivers; for saith He, *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* See you how that it is not four rivers, but an infinite number of them, that issue forth from that fountain! And it is not only for their number, but for their nature too, that this fountain demands our admiration. For it is not streams of water that are here, but gifts of the Spirit: and their fountain is divided into its branches, supplying one to every soul of the faithful: divided, yet not lessened; broken into portions, yet not exhausted; separated into many parts, yet undiminished: perfect with all, and perfect in each. For thus abundant are the gifts of the Spirit.

Would you know the copiousness of these streams?

Would you know the properties of these waters? How they are unlike those here, and more excellent and admirable than they? Hear, again, Christ himself saying to the woman of Samaria, (to shew you the copiousness of the fountain), *The water*, saith he, *that I will give to the believer, shall be in him a fountain of water springing up unto everlasting life.* He does not say, *coming forth*, he does not say, *pouring forth*, but, *springing up*, intimating to us by the springing, the abundance that is there. Fountain waters are wont to spring up and burst forth in every direction, where the wells fail to confine them in their bosom, and they, through the force of their constant flowing, prevail over the restraint, and gush out everywhere. When, therefore, he would indicate the copiousness of the streams, he made use of the word, *springing up*, and not, *coming forth.* Would you further know the properties of this fountain? Learn them by use. For they are useful, not for the present life, but for life eternal.

In this paradise, therefore, let us linger;—by this fountain let us take our seats: lest that which happened to Adam should happen unto us, and we too should be deprived of our paradise. Let us not hearken to counsel that tends to our destruction: let us not give heed to the deceitful schemes of the devil. Let us abide within; for great is the security that is to be found there: let us abide in the reading of these

Scriptures. For just as they that sit by a fountain and enjoy the breeze there, and bathe often their faces when the heat is oppressive, resist, by the help of the waters, the influence of the scorching weather, and when thirst is troublesome, easily remedy the inconvenience, having near them the medicine which the fountain supplies; thus he who sits by the fountain of the Divine Scriptures, even when he experiences trouble from the flame of inordinate lust, finds it easy to quench that flame by bathing his soul in these streams; and when heating passion attacks him, firing the heart like a caldron placed over blazing coals, by sprinkling a little of the stream, he reduces directly the violence of such passion. In fact, the reading of the Divine Scriptures has the effect of snatching the soul out of all wicked thoughts, just as it were out of the midst of burning fire.

Wherefore also, that great prophet David, knowing the benefits to be derived from the Sacred Writings, compares the person that attends constantly to the Scriptures, and enjoys acquaintance with them, to an evergreen plant growing beside the water streams, in these words;—*Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, and hath not sat in the seat of destruction. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law will he meditate day and night; and he shall be as a tree planted by the water-courses.*

For as that tree planted by the water-courses, from growing so near the very streams themselves, and having so constant a supply of moisture, is able to bear without injury every influence of unfavourable weather, and fears not the kindling heat of the sunbeam, nor dreads the warmth of the most sultry atmosphere; (seeing that by having sufficient moisture enclosed within itself, it resists and repels directly every attack of excessive heat from the sun without,) just so, the soul, stationed by the streams of the Divine Scriptures, and drinking from them continually, by collecting in itself those waters, and the dew of the Spirit, is able to abide, uninjured, every casualty of occurring events: and though disease, or affront, or calumny, or reproach, or ridicule, or any spirit of indolence, or all the evils of the world, were to direct their violence against a soul thus furnished, it can easily repel the fiery attack of these troubles, having a sufficient support from the reading of the Scriptures. For not the grandeur of glory, nor the pomp of princely power, nor the society of friends, nor any other of human comforts, will ever afford such solace to the afflicted spirit, as the reading of the Divine Scriptures. And why this? Because those comforts being mortal and corruptible, the consolation they afford is corruptible too. But the reading of the Scriptures, this is converse with God. When, therefore, God comforts the despond-

ing soul, what object in the universe has power to keep it still in its despondency?

Let us then give our attention to this reading, not for this couple of hours only; (for this little hearing of the Word is not sufficient for our safety;) but continually. And let every one, when he returns home, take the Bible in his hands, and reflect on the meaning of what is said here, that is, if he would derive permanent and full benefit from the Scripture. For that tree that grows by the water streams, has to do with the water, not for two or three hours, but every day and every night. Thus it is that it is clothed with leaves; thus it is that it bends with fruit, even though no man supply it with moisture. For itself is stationed by the water; it drinks in the moisture through its roots, and sends the benefit, through certain pores as it were, to all the body. Thus, too, he that is constantly reading the Divine Scriptures, and stationed by their streams, even though he have no one to interpret for him, yet from constant reading, drinks in, through certain fibres, as it were, considerable benefit.

Therefore, it is that we, who know your many anxieties, and distracting cares, and numerous avocations, are leading you quietly and gradually, to reflection upon the Scriptures. For the violent rain that pours in terrents, washes over the earth's surface, but furnishes no benefit to the ground beneath; but when it descends quietly and gradually upon

the surface of the country, like oil, soaking in deep through its vein-like pores, filling its inner parts with moisture, it is then that it makes it ready for the production of rich and luxuriant fruit. And we, therefore, drop this spiritual rain gently into your souls. For the Scriptures are like spiritual clouds, &c. &c.

No. III.

THE INTRODUCTORY PART OF THE 35TH HOMILY UPON GENESIS. (CHAP. XIII.)—*Tom. IV.* 349.

THE reading of the Divine Scriptures, beloved brethren, is a great privilege. It is this that imbues the soul with philosophy: it is this that elevates the mind to heaven: it is this that fills a man with gratitude for mercies received: it is this that teaches us not to be dazzled with present circumstances: it is this that leads our thoughts to dwell on other scenes: it is this that guides us in all our doings, to have respect unto the recompense of the Lord, and so to engage in the labours of virtue with alacrity of mind. For from them we may clearly learn the providence of the speedy succour of God, the fortitude of the just, the goodness of the Lord, and the greatness of the prize proposed to us. From studying them we may be roused to emulate and imitate the philosophy of the brave, and not be chilled in

our struggles after virtue, but take courage from the promises of God, even before we see them come to pass.

Let us then, I beseech of you, attend with all diligence to the reading of the Divine Scriptures. For thus shall we attain to knowledge, by constant application to their contents. For it cannot be, that he who gives his attention to Divine things with earnestness and strong desire, should ever be neglected: but even though we have no human instructor, the Lord Himself, descending from on high into our hearts, will enlighten our mind, give a brightness to our reasoning faculties, reveal those things that are hidden, become our teacher in what we know not;—if only we be willing to contribute our own part. For, *call not*, saith he, *any one master upon earth.* When, therefore, we take into our hands the volume indited by the Spirit, let us collect our thoughts, summon up all our attention, put away from us every earthly care, and thus set about our reading, with much devoutness, with much diligence, that so we may be guided by the Holy Spirit to a right understanding of what is written, and thus reap much benefit from the study.

For that barbarian Eunuch of the Queen of the Ethiophians, surrounded as he was with so much grandeur, and driving along in his carriage, did not neglect his reading, but holding the prophet in his hands, kept attending to the study with much dili-

gence, and this, although he understood not the contents. But nevertheless, when he contributed all that was needful on his part, earnestness, interest, attention,—he obtained a guide. And consider now, I pray you, what a remarkable thing it was, not to forget reading, even when he was going on a journey, and moreover, when seated in his carriage. Listen to this, you that will not be persuaded to do this even in your houses, but think that the reading of these Scriptures is a needless task, and that because men have the company of a wife to occupy them, or servants to look after, or cares of other sorts of business to attend to, it is therefore inconvenient for them to take much trouble about the reading of the Scriptures. For see here an Eunuch, a native of a savage land, both of them circumstance calculated to draw one into habits of great indolence; and besides this, the man's grandeur and state, the abundance of his wealth, the very circumstance of his being on a journey, and driving in his carriage; (for it is no easy matter, but a very difficult one, for a person so travelling to attend much to reading,) yet nevertheless his earnestness and strong anxiety removed every impediment, and he held fast to the perusal; and did not say,—as many now-a-days,—I do not understand the contents, I cannot comprehend the depth of what is written there—what good would there be in my taking the trouble in vain, and to

no purpose, reading, when I had no one by able to guide me to the meaning? None of this reasoning entered the thoughts of that person, barbarian as he was in tongue, yet philosopher in heart. But reflecting that he should not be neglected, but would be sure to obtain help from on high, if he were to contribute his own part, and what was according to his ability, he kept reading on.

Therefore, the Lord of mercy, beholding his earnest desires, neglected him not, nor left him unprovided for, but sent him a teacher directly. But observe, I pray you, the wisdom of God, how He awaited first his contributing his own part, and then supplies aid from Himself.* Then, when he did all that was required on his part, the Angel of of the Lord upon this appeared to Philip, saying, '*Arise and go on the way that leadeth unto Gaza from Jerusalem, which is desert.*' *And behold a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch, officer of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot, was reading the prophet Esaias.* See how accurately the writer of this book has described the circumstances, mentioning that he was *an Ethiopian*, so as that we might know him to be a barbarian; then

* We are not to understand that man can anticipate the grace of God by doing of himself what is good and pleasing in his sight. But we may neglect the grace given, "the gift that is in us." To him that hath shall be given; and if we would seek more grace, let us first, like the Ethopian eunuch, endeavour to make a right use of what we have received.

he says *an officer*, implying that he was surrounded by the greatest dignity and splendour; *who had come*, says he, *to Jerusalem, for to worship.* See also the reason of his journey, which is sufficient to prove the goodness of his disposition: consider what a long expedition he undertakes, in order to offer adoration to the Lord. For men were still of opinion that Divine worship was to be confined to a single place; and for this reason it was that they undertook the long journey, to present their petitions there: it was for this reason too that the person here spoken of had come to the place where the temple was, and the Jewish service, to pay his adoration to the Lord. And when he had fulfilled the desire of his heart, *returning* home, says the Sacred Writer, *and sitting in his chariot, he employed himself with reading*, as he went along.

Then Philip having come near, says to him, *Understandest thou what thou readest?* Mark you the earnest spirit of the man, not understanding indeed the contents, yet still applying to the reading, and anxious to meet with a teacher to guide him? For the apostle,* by his question, at once arouses his eagerness. And that he was worthy to meet with one to guide him to the understanding of what was contained in his book, the man's very answer sufficiently shews. For when the apostle said, *Under-*

* *i.e.*, Philip, the Lord's *Messenger*, although not an Apostle in the usual sense of the word, as applied to the Twelve.

standest thou? and came near in his poor humble garb, he was not offended, he was not angry, he did not look on it as an affront, as many unwise persons would, who often choose to remain in perpetual ignorance, from being ashamed to acknowledge their ignorance, and learn from those that could instruct them. But he shewed no such spirit; but makes his reply with all gentleness and piety, evidencing the state of his mind; and says, *For how can I, except some person guide me?*

Nor did he merely answer with meekness, and then drive on; but rather giving a further proof of the excellence of his own feelings, the prince, the barbarian, driving in his carriage, on giving this answer, invited the poor humble looking stranger, clad as he was in his mean and ill attire, to come up and take his seat by himself. See you his warmth of soul? See you the extent of his piety? See you the godly disposition of the barbarian? How he fulfilled the saying of a certain wise one, 'When thou seest a prudent man, go to him early in the morning, and let thy foot be familiar with the steps of his threshold.' See you how righteously he obtained aid from Divine Providence? See you how he omitted nothing of what was required on his part? Therefore, he afterwards met with a teacher, and learned accurately the force of the contents, and had his understanding enlightened.

Observe you now what an advantage it is to apply to the reading of the Divine Scriptures with diligence and earnestness? For this was the reason why I brought before you the narrative concerning this barbarian, that there may be no one among us who would feel ashamed to imitate the example of the Ethiopian, the eunuch, that would not even on a journey neglect the reading of them. For that barbarian is fit to become teacher of us all, whether we be of those who have chosen a private life, or of the number of them that pursue military affairs, and live in pomp and grandeur,—and once for all, fit to teach every body, not men only, but women too, as being constantly at home,—aye, and those too who follow the profession of monks, that all people may understand, that there is no season unsuited to the perusal of the Divine Oracles, but that it is possible, not only at home, but likewise when we move about in public, or pursue our journey, or are in the midst of many persons around us, or are involved in business,—to be still occupied with them, in order that when we contribute what is sought on our part, we may speedily obtain the help of one to guide us. For the Lord, seeing our concern about spiritual things, will not disregard us, but will afford us the illumination [that cometh down] from on high, and enlighten our understandings.

Let us then, I beseech you, not neglect this reading, but whether we understand the force of

the contents, or be ignorant of them, let us still apply ourselves to them continually. For such constant attention makes it impossible for what we have read to be effaced from our memory; and often it happens that what we could not find out the meaning of to-day, we discover readily, when we attack the same part again to-morrow, God in His merciful kindness invisibly enlightening our minds. Thus much have we addressed to you on the constant reading of the Divine Scriptures, &c., &c.

No IV.

THE LATTER PART OF THE THIRD HOMILY ON THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS. (CHAP. II.)—*Opp. Tom. ii. p.* 527.

People imagine that it is to us they come, when they come to this place;—they imagine it is from us they hear what they do hear;—they do not consider, they do not reflect, that they are coming into God's presence; that it is He who speaks to them. For when the reader stands up and says, 'Thus saith the Lord,' and the deacon also stands and enjoins silence on all present, it is not to pay respect to the reader he says this, but rather through reverence for the One who by His mouth addresses all of us. If men understood that it is God who speaks

these words to us by the prophet, they would away with all their vanity. For if when our rulers address them, they feel it to be necessary that their thoughts should not wander elsewhere, how much more should they feel it when it is God who speaks.

We, beloved, are [but] ministers. We speak not our own words, but those of God. It is letters that come from Heaven which are read here day by day. But tell me, I pray you:—if, while we are all here present, there were to come in a person with a golden belt, and pompous air, and stately walk, and that he were to say that he was sent by our earthly king, and brought a letter about matters of necessity that concerned the whole community, would you not all give him your attention? Would you not observe deep silence, even though the deacon were never to enjoin it? I certainly think that you would. If then any one comes from the king, you all pay attention: and will none attend when a messenger comes from God, and when the prophet speaks from Heaven. Do you not believe that what is spoken comes from God? These epistles are sent from God. Let us then come to church with due reverence, and listen with fear to the things that are spoken to us.

'But why shall I come there,' says some person, 'if I am not to hear any one preaching?' This is what has upset and ruined every thing. For what is the need of a preacher? It is a need which has arisen

from our own indolence. For what necessity is there for commentary? All is straight and clear in the Divine Scriptures. All necessary things are plain. But because you love to hear what gratifies yourselves, therefore it is that you seek after these things. For tell me, with what high flowing language did Paul ever speak? And yet he converted the world. And what refinements did the unlearned [apostles] make use of?

'But I do not understand,' says the objector, 'the contents of the Divine Scriptures.' And why dont you understand them? Are they in Hebrew? Are they in Latin? Are they in any foreign tongue? Are they not expressed in [our own] Greek?* 'Yes, but in an obscure style,' says the objector. What obscurity? Tell me. Are they not historical narratives? And, to be sure, you know the plain parts, since you are raising questions upon what is obscure. There are numberless historical narratives in the Scriptures. Tell me one of them. Nay, you will not do that. This is all pretext and excuse. 'Every day' says an objector, 'one may hear the same things.' But stay;—tell me, dont you hear the same things at the theatres constantly? And do you not see the same sights at the circus? And are not all things the same? Is it not the same sun that rises always? And dont we use constantly the same food? I should wish to put a question to you, since

*Greek was the language spoken by Chrysostom and his hearers.

you say you hear the same things every day:—tell me, What prophet is it we have been reading? or, What apostle? or What epistle? Ah, you are not able to tell, but appear as if you had been listening to something strange to you.

You see that when you wish to be indolent, you say it is the same thing always: but when you are questioned, you appear never to have heard it. If it be the same, you ought to know it. And yet you know it not. Now this is a lamentable state of things,—lamentable, and sorrowful, that the workman is labouring in vain. This was the reason why you should give particular attention to what you hear; as it is always the same, and that we cause you no trouble, and do not urge on you novel and varying tasks. What then! since you say those lessons are the same, and that our discourse is not the same, but that we are always bringing forward new matter, do you attend to it? By no means! But if we say,—'Why do you not retain these exhortations,' you say, 'We hear them [but] once, and how then could we retain them?' And if we ask, 'Why do you not retain those other lessons?' 'Oh,' say you, 'the same things are said always over and over.' And these excuses of laziness and sloth are urged in every quarter. But this shall not go on always thus: but there shall be a time when our mourning shall be vain and fruitless. Which may God avert; and may He rather grant us repentance here, and grace

to give heed with wisdom and with piety to the word spoken, that we may be excited to the performance of good works, and to regulate our lives here with all carefulness, that by His grace and mercy, we may be made partakers of the blessings promised to them that love Him.

No. V.

HOMILY II. (AL. X.) ON ST. JOHN I. 4. *And the Word was made flesh &c. Opp. Tom. viii. p. 62.*

ONE favor I shall ask of you before I proceed to handle the words of the Evangelist—and I must beg of you not to refuse the demand. For neither is the object of my desire anything of an oppressive or burdensome nature, nor is it an object of such a character as to benefit me the receiver only, but, [on the contrary, one which will be accompanied with advantage to] yourselves also by whom it is conferred—Nay, to you perhaps it may prove far more beneficial in its tendency. What then is it that I would require of you? It is, that on the first day of the week, or on the Sabbath itself, you would, every one of you, take in your hands that portion of the Gospels which is to be read out among you here; and while you sit at home, read it over attentively, and often search into, and examine the con-

tents, and study them carefully; so as to note, what indeed is plain, and what obscure; and what statements have the appearance of being contradictory to others, although not so in reality;—and in short, after having weighed all carefully, then come, thus prepared, to our meeting together, where you may hear the preaching of the Word. And the advantage likely to result from such study, both to yourselves and to us, will be not at all inconsiderable. For we indeed shall not have occasion for much trouble, in making clear to you the force and meaning of the expressions used, when your mind has been already familiarised to the consideration of the terms; and you yourselves also shall by this method become much more sharp and clearsighted, not only in your hearing, or in your learning for yourselves, but even so as to become competent to instruct others also.

For according to the present mode of proceeding, the most part of those who attend in this place, are obliged to take into their minds all together, both the words of the text, and our comments upon them. And if we were to keep acting on this plan even for a whole year together, it cannot be expected that they should reap much benefit from such a course. For how should they?—When all the attention they give to the matter is bestowed merely in a passing, occasional, sort of way, and just for this short season while we are here.

And if some will throw the blame on the matters of business and cares which engage them, and the urgent pressure of their enployments, public and private,—in the first place, this very circumstance is one which of itself involves no little culpability,—that a man should allow himself to be encircled with such a flood of worldly affairs, and so entirely nailed to the cares of this present life, as to be unable to bestow even a brief period of leisure on matters that are of more vital consequence than all beside. Then further,—that this is mere dissembling and pretence, may be argued to a demonstration from the time spent in company between them and their friends, and their frequent visits to the theatre, and the hours they spend in the assemblies, looking on at the equestrian feats there;—employments in which they have not unfrequently consumed whole days.

Thus, you have been able to find seasons in abundance for keeping company with your friends, and none of them has ever complained on those occasions, of a want of leisure from worldly business;—and for these worthless amusements you can afford to forget all your excuses, and enjoy profound leisure;—but if you be called on to occupy yourselves with the things of God, these are with you so much less necessary and valuable than all the rest, that you do not feel it requisite to set apart ever so small a portion of your time for giving to them your

undivided attention. And are men of such a disposition worthy to enjoy the air they breathe, or to see the light of day?

There is also another excuse employed by persons of this indolent frame, which is utterly devoid of reason, viz., that they have never gotten a Bible, and have none in their possession. And as far indeed as the wealthy are concerned, it would be ridiculous for us to spend any words on such a pretext. But as I believe that many of our poorer brethren are in the habit of using it very often, I should be glad to ask of them this one question, whether they have not every one of them gotten, complete and perfect, all the tools and implements belonging to the different trades at which they individually labour? even though they have to struggle with poverty in the most pinching form? How then is it not absurd, there indeed to set forth no excuses, but carefully to use all means to prevent the existence of impediment of any kind, in the way of their toils; but here, where such unspeakable benefits are to be reaped, to be whining over their want of leisure and their poverty. And further, even if any be so far sunk in poverty, yet might they from the continual reading which is kept up in this place, escape from being ignorant of the contents of any part of the Divine Scriptures.

And if it seem to you that this is a matter of impossibility, it is no wonder that it should seem so.

For it is not with much interest or desire that many come to hear what is read among us; and even when such persons do come, satisfying themselves with this exercise, as sufficient for the day, away they go home, as soon as ever *it* is over.—Or if some of them stay for the rest of the service, they are no better disposed than the others who leave, seeing that they remain here in our company only as far as their bodies are concerned. But, however, that we may not weary you by dwelling further on these charges, or spend all our time in exposing what is blameable, let us turn to the words of the Gospel; for it is time for us to direct our observations to our proper subject. But rise and attend, so as that none of our remarks may escape your hearing. *And the word*, says the Sacred Writer, *was made flesh, and dwelt among us*, &c. &c.

No. VI.

ON THE WORDS OF OUR SAVIOUR IN ST. JOHN, iv. 13, 14.
Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, &c.—Opp. Tom. viii. Hom. xxxii. (al. xxxi.) p. 187.

SEE how this woman's mind has been drawn to study more exalted themes. She, whose anxiety had been occupied in considering how to avoid the inconvenience of thirst, now makes enquiries relative to doctrinal points. And how does Christ act

in these circumstances? He does not resolve her question. For it was not His method to concern himself much in simply giving a reply to observations thus made to him. Such a course would have been attended with comparatively little benefit to the hearer. But He leads the woman on further, to meditate on matters of higher import; and no sooner enters upon such conversation with her, than she is led to confess her belief that He is a prophet: so that she well might listen with full confidence to any remarks that He should address to her subsequently. For, after having once made such an admission as this, she could have no longer any room to doubt concerning the further statements which might fall from his lips.

Let us then, ever henceforth, be ashamed and blush for ourselves. That woman, who had had five husbands, and who was a Samaritan, exhibits all this interest about religious doctrines;—and no thought about losing the most useful part of the day,—no eagerness to attend to some occupation of a different sort,—nor other consideration whatsoever, was of sufficient weight with her, to induce her to neglect inquiring into such particulars. But we not merely will take the trouble to examine points of doctrine,—but are even exhibiting a careless indifference of disposition in all our ways. Therefore it is that all our privileges are neglected. For which

of you, let me ask, while at home in your houses, has taken into his hands the Christian's Book, and gone carefully into the contents, and made a searching examination into the Scriptures. None of you can say that you have done so. As far as dice and dominoes are concerned, we shall find most of you supplied with *them*—but Bibles no where; or else certainly with very few.

And even those few shew the same disposition as the others that have none, by folding them up and storing them carefully in their chests. And their whole study is to have the parchment fine, and the letters beautiful, and not how they may secure the reading [of the book.] For it was not so much for profit or improvement they made purchase of them: but they have been led to take an interest in these matters, with a view to making a display therein of their wealth and grandeur:—so excessive is the influence which vain glory exercises. For I do not hear of any one's boasting that he knows the contents, though I do of persons [glorying] in having them embellished with letters of gold. And what, let me ask, is the use of this? For the Scriptures were never given for this end, that we should have them in our Bibles merely; but that we should have them graven also in our hearts: since the mere possession of them,—the having of the commandments deposited with us in the letters merely,

—is a matter for Jews to boast of. Yet never was the law given to us at all in this form, but on the fleshy tables of the heart. And this I say, not that I would hinder you from getting bibles,—(nay that is what I applaud, and most fervently desire;) but I would have the contents, both letters and thoughts, transferred from them into our minds;—that they may thus be purified, by receiving into them the sense and meaning of the words. For if [it be supposed, as it is by some, that] in a house where a Gospel be lying, the devil will not venture to make his approach, much more will he never lay hold upon a soul that bears with it such meditations as those [furnished in the Holy Scriptures]. Such an one no demon, no form of sin, shall be able to secure as the object of his prey.

Sanctify then thy soul,—sanctify thy body,—by keeping these ever in thy heart, and ever on thy tongue. For if lewd conversation pollutes the mind, and invites the demons to assault us,—manifest it must be, that this spiritual reading will sanctify, and attract towards us the Grace of the Spirit. In these characters is seen the hand of God Himself. Let us then practice the recital of them to ourselves, and prepare for our use the medicines which they supply against the disorders of the soul. For if we but know what things they are that we read of there, we cannot but listen to them with attentive interest.

These lessons I am ever urging upon you, nor shall I cease to urge them. For how can we regard it as otherwise than absurd, that they indeed who take their seats in the public circus, are able to discourse of all that concerns the equestrian actors, or the dancers,—their names, and their families, and their native places, and the extent of their abilities;—and even to describe with accuracy the good and bad points of the very horses;—and that those who meet in this place should be entirely deficient in a right understanding of any of the proceedings which demand our attention while here? Yea, even so far as to be ignorant of the very number of books in the Bible. For if it be for pleasure's sake that you follow those pursuits, I shall be able to prove to you that you may find much more to interest you here. For which, allow me to ask, is it more interesting, which is it more wonderful, to see man wrestling with man, or man engaged in combat with the devil, and a bodily form grappling in close contest with an incorporeal power, and bearing away the victory. Be these the wrestling matches to which we shall go as spectatators. For there it is both honourable, and also profitable, to study and imitate;—and they who imitate them have opportunity afforded them to gain crowns for themselves also. But not so those other spectacles;—the stu-

dying of which brings but scandal to him that imitates them. For in looking on at wrestling such as that, if you do indeed attend as a spectator there, you associate yourself with demons;—but in this other, with angels, and with the angels' Lord. For tell me, supposing that you were permitted to sit as a spectator along with rulers and kings, and to enjoy the sight in their company, would you not consider this to be the greatest possible honour? Here, however, where you may sit as a spectator with the King of angels, and see the devil seized by the middle of the back, and making many hard struggles to have the mastery, and availing nothing, —you turn not your attention to the wondrous sight.

And how, some one will say, may we come to witness this spectacle? [I reply,] by taking the Bible into your hands. For in it you shall see the benches of spectators, and the long ranges [where the scene is enacted,] and the struggles and warrior efforts of the righteous man. And moreover, from witnessing these objects, you shall come to know how to wrestle yourself too, in like manner, and to prove victorious over demons. For as to these performances which are carried on without, they are but assemblies of demons, not theatres of men. And if it be not lawful to enter into the idol's temple, much more [is it unlawful] to be present at Satan's entertainment. These admonitions I will never

cease to press upon you, howsoever offensive they may prove, until I see a change. For to urge on you such words of exhortation, *to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.*

Be not, however, offended at my admonishing you thus:—for if there were occasion for *any* to be offended, it should be I, who speak often, and am not attended to; and not you, that are indeed ever hearing, but still ever neglecting what you hear. But heaven forbid that you should continue always to lay yourselves open to this charge:—may you rather, forsaking those scandalous exhibitions, to which we have alluded, be counted worthy to enjoy the spiritual sights aforesaid, and the glory that shall follow, through the grace and kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom, unto the Father be Glory, together with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever.—Amen.

No VII.

ON THE WORDS OF OUR B. LORD IN ST. JOHN v. 38, 39.—*Tom.* viii. *Hom.* 40, *(al.* 39*), p.* 240.

Nor have ye His word abiding in you;—that is, the commandments, the precepts, the law, the prophets. 'For even [it is implied,] though God hath given you them in charge, yet are they not adhered to by you, since ye believe not in me.

For if the Scriptures, in various passages throughout their contents, make this assertion, that it is necessary to believe in me, and you do not believe, it is clearly evident that His word hath departed from you.' Therefore also, he adds again the remark, that, *whom He hath sent, Him ye believe not.* Then, lest they should say, 'How, therefore, if we have not heard His voice, hath He borne witness unto thee?' He bids them, *Search the Scriptures; for they are they which testify of me:* thus pointing out to them how that in them [*i.e.*, in those Scriptures] He [that is, God,] had given His testimony [concerning Christ.]

It is true that He also bore testimony to Him, both in the Jordan, and on the Mount [of transfiguration.] But that voice [which bore witness to Him on those occasions] he does not here bring forward: as the testimony in His favour derivable from that source would probably not have been attended to by them. For on one occasion when it was uttered, namely, on the mountain, they did not even hear it; and on the other occasion, they heard indeed, but gave no heed unto it. On this account, therefore, he sends them to the Scriptures, indicating to them that the Father's testimony is to be gathered thence also, after he had first removed the old grounds on which they were in the habit of boasting, either as having seen God, or as having heard his voice. And where it was likely that

they would be slow to believe the voice in question, and that they would still be turning their fancies to the wonders of Mount Sinai, correcting their speculations on those matters, and showing them how the circumstances of that occasion were accommodated to the faculties of men, He ultimately refers them to the testimony of the Scriptures.

And let us, therefore, when we have contend with heretics, and are putting on our armour, derive our strength from the same source. For *all Scripture*, says the Apostle, *is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* Not, that he may attain to some qualifications indeed, and be without others; for such an one were not perfect. For what benefit, let me ask, would there be, though a man were to pray earnestly, if he were not liberal in shewing mercy? but were to be a covetous man and an extortioner,—except so far as consisted in making a shew before men, and seeking praise from the beholders;—or if he were to shew mercy with all exactness, and in a manner accordant with the requisitions of the Divine command, but were to be puffed up and think highly of himself on this account;—or if he were to walk humbly, and be diligent in fastings, and yet be a lover of money and avaricious, nailed to earthly affections, and admitting to his soul the

parent of all mischief. For this love of money is the root of all evils, &c. &c.

[What immediately follows here in St. Chrysostom having no reference to the particular subject (of the reading of the Scriptures) for which the extracts contained in this little book are set before the reader, it is unnecessary to extend the quotation further; and we accordingly end it here, as in the other instances above, at the point where the writer ceases to dwell on that one particular subject, and turns to occupy himself in commenting upon other topics.]

No. VIII.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE SIXTH HOMILY ON GENESIS. (CHAP. I.) —*Opp. Tom. iv. p.* 48.

FOR of what use, tell me, is your fasting, where you [just] pass the day without food, but [at the same time] devote yourself to dice, and unprofitable trifling, or even spend the hours, as is often done, on perjuries and blasphemous conversation? O let us not, I beseech you, be thus negligently disposed with regard to our own salvation. But rather let our communications be constantly on spiritual themes. Let a man take the Book of God* in his hand, and inviting together his neighbours, let him irrigate, from the Divine Word, his own understanding and theirs who have thus assembled with him: that by such exercises we may both be enabled to escape the wiles of the evil one, and

* The word '*book*' in this place has no *article* in the original, and seems to mean '*A book of God*,', i.e. *one of the books of the Bible*.

also make our fast conducive to benefits worthy of consideration, turning to good account the benevolence of God to mankind, through the grace and mercies of His Only-begotten Son, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be Glory, Might, and Honor, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

No. IX.

PART OF THE INTRODUCTORY MATTER OF THE NINETEENTH HOMILY ON GENESIS. (CHAP. IX.)—*p.* 527, *ib.*

YOU have seen, beloved, how of all the matters contained in the Divine Scripture, each individual portion has been placed on record for no other end than to benefit us, and promote the salvation of our race. Bearing this, then, in mind, let us gather thence, and apply, each one to his own case, the medicines adapted for application to it. For it was to this end that they have been set forth freely before all: and whosoever will has it in his power to make use of the remedy appropriate to the ailment which troubles him, and to obtain recovery with all possible expedition, so as he only does not thrust from him the course of treatment which the system suggests, but exhibits a proper degree of good feeling towards it.

For there is not, among the ailments with which

man's nature is afflicted, any one, of mind or body, which is incapable of receiving alleviation from that store. Take, for example, the case of some one who enters here involved in sorrow, and harrassed with oppressing cares. When he comes in, and hears presently the prophet saying, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Set thy hope on God: for to Him will I give praise, who is the help of my countenance, and my God;*—he leaves the place with a full sense of consolation, relieved of all those feelings of despondency.

Another, again, who has to struggle with extreme poverty, feels discontented and unhappy at seeing others rolling in wealth, and puffed up with pride, and surrounded with extensive display. This one too hears the same prophet again saying—*Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He will sustain thee;* and, again;—*Fear not thou, though a man become rich, and though the glory of his house be increased: for he shall take nothing away with him when he cometh to die.*

Another, again, suffers vexation from being made the victim of conspiracies and unjust accusations, and looks upon life as miserable, unable, as he is, to obtain human aid in any quarter. He also is instructed by the same blessed prophet, not to have recourse to human aid in circumstances such as those. For he hears him saying, *They spake falsely*

against me: but I betook myself unto prayer. See you to what quarter he turns for succour. Those others, he saith, are contriving schemes, and calumnious charges, and conspiracies ;—but I turn for shelter to the invincible fortress,—to the safe anchor,—to the port whose waters are calm,—*to prayer;* by the aid whereof all my vexations became light and easy to be borne.

Another, again, is overlooked and slighted by those who once paid him attention;—is deserted by his friends;—and the circumstance occasions him the most distressing and uneasy reflections. Yet even he too, on coming to this place, if he be so disposed, shall hear the same blessed [servant of God] saying, *My friends and my neighbours came, and stood over against me, and my nearest ones stationed themselves afar off: while they that sought after my life assaulted me with violence; and such as were desirous of my hurt talked of wickedness, and imagined deceits all the day long.* See you them contriving their schemes even to compass his death, and engaged in unceasing war upon him? For this is indicated by the expression, *all the day long*, showing that it was so all his life. What course then did he adopt, when they were plotting together and contriving their schemes in this way? *But I*, saith he, *as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. I became even as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.*

Mark you the depth of his philosophy, and by what an opposite mode of procedure he became the conqueror. They were contriving their plots. He even shut his ears, that he might not hear. They, all the while, ceased not to sharpen their tongues, and speak of wickedness and deceits. It was by silence that he, on the other hand, repressed their phrenzy. And wherefore behaved he thus? And why was it, that when they were engaged in such machinations, he became like one deaf and dumb, and unpossessed of tongue or hearing? Listen to the account he gives himself, of the philosophy that influenced him. *For in Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust.* Seeing that I have made my dependence to rest, saith he, on the hope that I have in Thee, the proceedings that they are engaged in occasion me no concern. For thine aid sufficeth to confound them all,—to render ineffectual their plots and schemes,—and hinder any of their machinations from being attended with success.

See you how from that source we may obtain a medicine suitable for the relief of every trouble wherewith human nature is afflicted,—have every sorrow of life removed,—and escape from being crushed by any of its vicissitudes. Let me therefore exhort you, both to be constant in your attendance here, and also to apply yourselves with diligence to the reading of the divine Scriptures; not [to listen to them] only when you come to this place, but also

to take the Bible of God in your hand at home, and give your fixed attention to the receiving of improvement from its contents.

For great are the advantages to be derived from such study. First, even the reform that reading of this kind produces in the tongue. Then also, that it gives wings and elevation to the soul, illuminated [as it thus becomes,] with the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and delivered, at the same instant, from the defilement of evil thoughts, and enabled to enjoy a serene tranquillity and quiet. And what our bodily nourishment effects for the support of our [natural] strength, this the reading [we speak of] does for the spirit of man. For it is a spiritual nutriment; and one that nerves the understanding, and gives power to the soul; improving its tone, imparting philosophic views, leaving it no more an easy prey to senseless passions, but giving buoyancy to its wing, and bearing it upward, so to speak, to heaven itself.

Let us not then, I beseech you, be negligent of these high advantages: but both at home in our houses be we diligent in applying ourselves to the reading of the divine Scriptures, and also, when we assemble here, let us not waste the time on trifling and idle conversations, but have our thoughts fixed on the object for which we have met. That so you may have some new fruit gathered, to bear with you at your departure hence.

No X.

PART OF THE OPENING MATTER OF THE THIRTEENTH HOMILY ON GENESIS. (CHAP. II.)—*p.* 100, *ib.*

NOTHING hinders us from examining the same passage with you again to-day, beloved. For just as it is the nature of sweet perfumes, the more they be rubbed with our fingers, the more of their fragrant odours to diffuse, so in the case of the Scriptures, a result exactly similar mny be observed. The more diligently that any one exerts himself to study them, so much the more fully is he enabled to discern the treasures hidden within, and to turn to advantage the vast and unspeakable riches of wealth which they contain.

No XI.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE FORTY-THIRD HOMILY ON GENESIS. (CHAP. XIX.)—*p.* 434, *ib.*

JUST as a meadow sprinkled with fair flowers displays to our view its varied and beautiful blossoms, so the divine Scripture displays to us the virtuous deeds of the righteous; not that, as in the case of the flowers, we may enjoy the fragrance only for a little while, but that we may reap abiding benefits from the study. For there, indeed, we but took those flowers in our hand, and after a little while they had faded, and their native grace was gone from

them. But not so here.—For when we gather in, from hearing [of the Word,] the virtuous deeds of the just, and store them up in the bosom of our understanding, we are able to enjoy, at will, their sweet fragrance, all our days.

No. XII.

PART OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH HOMILY ON GENESIS. (CHAP. XV.)—*p.* 372, *ib.*

GREAT is the power of the Divine Scripture, and large the riches of thought contained in its expressions. For which reason it behoves us diligently to apply ourselves to study it, and carefully to make our search into its meaning, that the benefit we derive from it may be large. For it was on this ground that Christ also commanded, saying, *Search the Scripture.* For such is the character of the Scripture. In a few expressions may often be found a great number of ideas. Its lessons are of God, and not of man. And for this reason it may be seen to be composed in a style altogether opposed to human wisdom. And how? I will tell you. For in *that*, I mean, in human wisdom, the whole study is devoted to the collocation of the phrases made use of. Here all is widely different. The Scripture is in no way concerned about beauty of expressions, or mode of collocation. For it has the grace that is divine

beaming forth from within, and its beauty consists in that which it communicates. And in those other compositions, it is after much, yea, ineffable, trifling, that one is able to lay hold on the sense intended to be conveyed. But here, as you are aware, even a short expression has often sufficed to furnish us with material for an entire discourse.

No. XII.

PART OF THE OPENING MATTER OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH HOMILY ON GENESIS. (CHAP. VII.)—*p.* 216, *ib.*

Noah, saith he, *was a just man, and perfect in his generation. Noah found favor with God.* On these few expressions we spent our whole discourse yesterday. For it is the nature of the divine oracles, that in a few expressions they exhibit a large riches of thoughts, and bestow treasures ineffable on such as are willing to search into them with diligence. Let us not then, I pray you, run carelessly over any of the contents of the Divine Scripture; but whether it be a catalogue of names, or a historical narative, let us investigate the treasure concealed beneath. For even to this end was it that Christ also said, *Search the Scriptures;* seeing that we may not always find on the surface the proper meaning of the contents; but there is need of even much investigation, that none of those lessons which be deep may escape our

observation. But if the simple appellation descriptive of our nature, I mean the name of *man*, has furnished us with suggestions of so much that is profitable, what a vast amount of benefit shall we not reap, if with an industrious and attentive spirit we apply ourselves to examine each portion of the Scripture in its turn. For we have a Lord who loves mankind, and when He sees us anxious, and that we exhibit a strong desire for the understanding of the Divine Oracles, He doth not leave us destitute of ought besides, but straightway enlightens our understanding, and bestows that illumination that proceedeth from Himself, and, according to His benign wisdom, communicates all true doctrine to our souls.

Therefore also, to encourage us to this work, and render us the more well inclined for it, He hath set forth, as entitled to blessings, those that exhibit such a desire, saying, *Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be supplied.* See the wisdom of this Teacher, urging us onward, not by the blessing only, but also by the use of this language: *hunger and thirst after righteousness.* He [thus] instructed His hearers, with what ardour men should pursue their search into the Spiritual Oracles. For just as men, saith He, under the pressure of hunger, are urged toward nourishment by an indescribable ardour, and they that have been parched from long-continued thirst approach the cup with eagerness, in the very same

way should we, as men influenced by hunger and thirst, draw nigh unto this Spiritual instruction. For such persons not only have a title to blessing, but shall also obtain the object of those eager desires. For He saith also, *they shall be supplied*, i.e. they shall be filled, they shall have their desires for spiritual objects gratified.

Seeing then that we have such a Lord, so good, so liberal,—come, let us betake ourselves to Him, and lay hold on the aid which He imparts, that according to His wonted love to mankind, He may enlighten our understanding to discern the power of these Divine Scriptures.

No. XIV.

PART OF THE OPENING MATTER OF THE TWENTY-FIRST HOMILY ON GENESIS. (CHAP. IV.)—*p.* 181, *ib.*

THEREFORE ought we to approach the Oracles of God, under the guidance of the grace which cometh down from above, and supplied with the illumination that proceedeth from the Holy Ghost. For it is not man's wisdom that the Divine Scripture needs, for the comprehending of what is written therein, but the revelation of the Spirit, to enable us to arrive at a true understanding of the contents, and derive from them a full amount of benefit.

No. XV.

PART OF THE FIFTY-NINTH *(al.* FIFTY-EIGHTH*)* HOMILY ON ST. JOHN (CHAP. X.)—*Opp. Tom. viii. p.* 346.

WHENCE, then, doth He establish, that He is not a deceiver, but a shepherd? By laying down the characters which belong to each; to the shepherd, and to the deceiver and seducer: and affording them opportunity to judge, from these, of the true state of the case.

First, he shows who is the deceiver and the thief, characterising him thus from the Scriptures, and saying;—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.* Observe the tokens of the thief. First, that he doth not come in openly. Secondly, that [he entereth] not in the way of the Scriptures. For this is what is implied in, *not by the door.* Herein He points at both such of these as were before Him, and such as were to be after him, Antichrist, and the false Christs, and Judas, and Theudas, and any other such, if such there have been.

And appropriately enough hath He called the Scriptures a door. For they lead us to God, and open to us the way of acquaintance with God. They make the sheep. They guard them, and exclude the wolves from liberty to enter. Like

some well secured door, [the Scripture] stops the way of ingress against heretics, placing us in all the security that we could wish for, and not allowing us to be deceived into error. Nor shall we, so long as we open not this [door] improperly, be easily overcome by our enemies. By means of it we shall be able to distinguish all, both such as are shepherds, and such as are not.

And what means, *into the sheepfold?* To the sheep, and the care of providing for them. For he that useth not the Scriptures, *but climbeth up some other way*, that is, cutting out for himself a different road, and not using the legalised one, *he is a thief.*

Here again you see Him exhibiting agreement with the Father, in thus bringing forward the Scriptures for public use. To this end also said He unto the Jews, *Search the Scriptures.* And he adduced Moses publicly among them, and cited him as a witness, and all the prophets likewise. For *all they*, saith He, *that have heard the prophets, shall come unto me.* And *if ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me.* And here he suggested the same view metaphorically, by the use of words, *climbeth up some other way;* pointing at the Scribes, who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and were transgressors of the law: as He himself also intimated in that reproof which He addressed to them, saying, *None of you keepeth the law.* Well, too, did He make use of the expression *climbeth up*, and not

cometh in, as describing the act of a thief attempting to get over the wall, and engaged in a procedure each step of which is accompanied with peril.

No. XVI

PART OF THE NINTH HOMILY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS. (CHAP. III.)—*Opp. Tom. xi. p.* 390.

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly; that is, the instruction, the doctrines, the exhortations, in which He represents the present life and all its good things as nothing worth. For if our eyes were open to them, we never should be overwhelmed by any of our troubles here. *Let it dwell*, saith He, *richly in you;* not, [dwell] merely, but in large abundance. Hear this, you that are engaged in worldly callings, and have a wife and children to look after, how He bids you also by all means to read the Scriptures, and that not in a cursory nor thoughtless way, but with serious attention. For as he that is rich in a pecuniary way is able to sustain loss and adverse judgments of court, so he that is rich in the possession of such principles as philosophy imparts, shall be able to bear up against not poverty alone, but misfortunes of every kind, with ease; aye, with more ease than [that wherewith] the other [sustains his troubles.] For in the case

of that other, in the discharging of his losses, he cannot avoid being reduced and worsted. And if this happen to him often, he will [in the end] be no longer able to support it. But not so here. For we do not *spend* our sound reflections, when forced to bear with circumstances not such as we could have wished for: but they still remain safe with us. . . . . .

(*ib.* p. 391.). Wait, then, for no other teacher. Thou hast the Oracles of God. None can teach thee like them. For this [human teacher] often withholds many a thing through affectation, or from a feeling of jealousy. Take advice, I pray you, all ye who are occupied with the affairs of this life, and possess yourselves of the Bible, the medicine chest for the soul. If you will do no more, procure at least the New [Testament;] the Acts of the Apostles,—the Gospels,—to be your constant instructors. If sorrow fall to your lot,—look in there, as to a medicine store:—from that repository select what will soothe your ailment; whether it will be a loss, or a death, or alienation from you of your own. Yea, rather, let it not suffice you to *look in*, but *take all* with you. This is the occasion of all sorts of mischief,—to be ignorant of the Scriptures. We march to the war without our weapons, and how then reckon on escaping with our lives! Throw not the whole burden upon *us*. You are sheep, [no doubt,] not however such as have no

reason, but possessed of that faculty. And to you also Paul addresses many a precept.

No. XVII.

PART OF A SERMON BY S. CHRYSOSTOM ON PS. XLVIII, 16. *Fear not thou &c.* (Ps. xlix., *Authorised Version.*)—*Opp. Tom.* v. p. 418.

NOW then, that we have made our escape from the excitement of these recent troubles*, let us repair to the reading of the Scriptures, to bathe our ears in them, as in the waters of a river. This is what the sailors also do. When, after having weathered the tempest, and traversed a wide expanse of sea, they gain a tranquil port,—they set their sails, and ship their oars, and leave their vessel, to refresh the body with the comforts of the bath, and food, and drink, and sleep, and relaxation, and to furnish it with new vigour for the portion of the voyage that remains. Their way of proceeding let us also imitate: and now that we have gotten away from this confusion which has recently occurred,—from the tumult, and the billows,—let us steer our souls to a haven where all is calm,—the reading of the Scriptures.

For here we have in truth, an unruffled haven,

* Some think that this refers to the occasion of St. Chrysostom's first banishment, A. D. 403;—others to earlier tumults, connected with Eutropius, &c., which occurred at Constantinople about A. D. 400.

and an impregnable fortress, and a tower that cannot be shaken, and a glory which none can take from us, and armour impenetrable to the foe, and [a ground for] courage that will never turn pale, and pleasure for evermore, and every thing excellent that one could name,—[all to be found] in acquaintance with the Divine Scriptures. This is what dissipates melancholy, and sustains a cheerful spirit, and makes the poor man wealthier than the affluent, and gives the rich security, and makes the sinner righteous, and places the righteous in safekeeping, and roots out existing evils, and implants the good that existed not,—expels vice and impels to virtue, nor impels to it merely, but roots one in it, and renders the effect abiding;—so as to be, in fact, a spiritual medicament, a divine and indescribable charm, for the removal of our ills. It plucks up, moreover, the thorns of sin,—makes the soil clean,—casts in the seeds of piety,—and brings the fruit to perfection.

Let us not then treat slightingly these high privileges,—nor forsake the sacred assemblies,—but run hither constantly, so as to have our cases regularly attended to;—and that none may, on the one hand, be struck with envy at observing the rich, nor any, on the other, be disheartened at poverty: but that each, learning to comprehend the true nature of things, may with rapid step hasten by the shadows, and lay hold on the realities. For the shadow, even

though it appear to be greater than the body, is after all but a shadow. But further, it *is* not even greater, but *seems* so,—and seems so only when we have the sunbeam falling less directly upon us. Thus at least, as the rays of midday fall on our head, it [i. e. our shadow,] gathers in from every side, and is contracted and curtailed. The like of which may be seen in human affairs also. For, so long indeed as any one stations himself at a distance from virtue, the affairs of this present life appear invested with great importance; but when he places himself in the very brightest light,—that of the Divine Scriptures, then he sees the poverty, and the fleetness, and the nothingness, of these perishable things of time, and becomes well aware, that they are in their nature no better than the waters of the river, that in the one moment are making their appearance and passing away.

No. XVIII.

FROM THE DISCOURSE OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM ON 2 TIM. III. 1. *This know also, &c. Opp. Tom. vi. p.* 281.

AS perfumes exhale their sweet odours, not by reason of their bulk, but in consequence of their nature, so the Divine Scriptures afford us all their profit, not by multiplying of words, but by the innate power of the matter. So too the nature of

incense is of itself possessed of a sweet fragrance, but when you cast it on the fire, it is then that it gives forth its sweets in all their fullness. Thus also the Divine Scripture is in itself of an excellent sweetness; but when it takes hold of your heart, as though it had fallen on an incense altar, then it is that it fills all the house with fragrance.

No. XIX.

THE LATTER PART OF THE SECOND HOMILY ON ST. MATTHEW.—*Tom. vii. pp.* 29-31.

AND is it not scandalous, and absurd in the extreme, that people having a servant, most commonly employ him about occupations of a needful character; but that where we have been gifted with a tongue, we do not use that member of our own with even as much wisdom as we should the services of a domestic, but employ it in a quite opposite manner, for useless and unimproving ends. And would that they were *but* unimproving: for now, far otherwise, are they at once mischievous, and utterly unproductive of any advantage to us. Were indeed the language we employed, adapted to bring advantage to ourselves, then should our communications have been in any wise pleasing unto God also. But now speak we all such words as the devil suggesteth, at one time giving vent to the

ridiculous, at another time using a style of elegance in our expressions; at one time dealing in the language of cursing and insult, at another time swearing, and lying, and perjuring; at one time raging in fierce passion, and again uttering nonsense, and folly, such as old women would scarce occupy themselves with, and so exhibiting ourselves before the public as promoting all those forms of communication in which it was utterly improper for us to have any part.

For what one, let me ask, of you that are standing here, could, if desired to do so, recite one single psalm, or any other [such] portion of the Divine Scriptures? Not one among you. Nor is that alone the full amount of the evil:—but this further, that you who are so dead to all spiritual exercises, should be so influenced as you are by a more than fiery ardour for those which have Satan for their author! For if any one were disposed to examine you in the devil's odes, and in lascivious and profligate melodies, he shall find a plenty of persons who know them accurately enough, and can recite them with much pleasure. And what is the apology made against such charges. 'I do not belong,' says one, 'to the monastic body, but I have both wife and children, and the charge of a family.' This is what has polluted our whole system; that you should suppose the reading of the Divine Scriptures to be an exercise proper for them only,

needing it, as you do all the while, yourselves, much more than they. For they who move about in the thick of the world, and are receiving [its] wounds from day to day, they are the people who have most necessity for medical aid. So that the neglecting to read is far exceeded in criminality by the sentiment which even represents the exercise as a needless one. Such expressions are of Satan's invention.

Hear ye not Paul saying, that *all these things were written for our admonition?* You however, if occasion occurred requiring you to take a Gospel in your hands unwashed, would not feel inclined to do this. But the contents within you do not consider to be of any great necessity for you. This is what has turned all upside down. For if you would learn what a power of good is in the Scriptures, [just] examine yourself, what you become when listening to a psalm, and what when hearkening to Satan's ode? and how you feel disposed while you remain in Church, and how while sitting in a theatre? And vast will be the difference observable between that soul and this, identical though they be. Therefore said Paul, *Evil communications corrupt good manners.* Therefore have we continual need to use the songs suggested by the Spirit. For this is that wherein we have an advantage over the unreasoning and brute creation; seeing that in other particulars we are even far excelled by them.

I will give them, saith [God,] *not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but a famine of hearing the Word of the Lord.* What, then, can be more miserable, than for you voluntarily to draw down on your own head, an evil which God threatens to inflict as a punishment, subjecting your soul to grievous famine, and reducing it to extremest weakness? For by words may it be either destroyed or saved. Their influence can work it up to angry passion: and by their influence may it be calmed again. And the indelicate expression hath sufficed for kindling lust within. And again has the voice of grave modesty recalled it to sobriety. And if language, of itself, hath power such as this, how comest thou, let me ask, to contemn the Scriptures? Surely if exhortation can effect thus much, far more, when the exhortation is that which the Spirit accompanies. Aye, more mightily than by fire itself is the hardened heart made soft, and brought to a state of readiness for all good works, by that word which goes echoing forth from the Scriptures of God.

And thus was it that Paul, when he had to deal with the Corinthians actuated by pride and unruly passions, restrained their swellings, and reduced them to sobriety. At the occurrence of acts which ought to have caused them to hide their heads with shame, they became puffed up. But when they had received the Epistle, hear what a change came over them;—one concerning which their teacher himself

hath borne testimony, saying;—*For this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what earnestness hath it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing desire, yea what zeal, yea what revenge!*

So let us, too, secure due order in our intercourse with servants, and children, and wives, and friends, and so make friends of our enemies. So also did the great men and the beloved of God grow in goodness. It was on receiving the privilege of hearing the Word, that David, after having sinned, was restored to that excellent state of penitence.—And it was by its power the Apostles grew to be what they were, and succeeeded in winning the whole world to become their followers.

'And of what use is it,' saith one, 'when a man hears, and yet practises not what is told him?' Of *no small* use is even the very hearing. For [by it] shall one [be led to] condemn himself, and mourn over [his ways], and come at length to put in practice what is inculcated. But when shall he, that is not even possessed with a sense of having transgressed, leave off his improprieties? When will he condemn himself?

Let us not, then, despise the hearing of the Divine Scriptures. For those objections are of Satan's devising, to hinder us from a sight of the treasure, for fear that we should make the riches our own.

Here is the reason why he suggests that the hearing of the divine laws are nothing worth, lest he should see the doing follow with us from the hearing. Knowing, then, this wicked contrivance of his, let us fortify ourselves on every side, that, guarded with these weapons, we may both escape having ourselves made prisoners, and also wound his head; that crowned with shining spoils of triumph, we may have our portion in the bliss to come, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be Glory, and Power, for ever and ever. Amen.

No. XX.

FROM THE ARGUMENT TO THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.—*Opp. Tom. ix. pp.* 425, 426.

EVERY time that I hear the Epistles of the blessed Paul read out in this place, twice in each week, or even thrice and four times, as they frequently are, when we celebrate the memories of the holy martyrs, it is with joy I catch the sound of the spiritual trumpet, and my heart exults and warms with feelings of affectionate desire, as I recognise the voice I love, and can all but fancy that I see himself present here, and conversing with us. But it is with pain and sorrow I reflect, that all do not know this excellent one, as he is worthy to be known: some,

on the contrary, being so far unacquainted with him, as not to be rightly aware even of the number of his epistles.

And this arises, not from ignorance, but from an unwillingness to maintain a regular intercourse with this blessed [one.] For it is not through any peculiar natural gift, or sharpness of intellect, that we ourselves have come to learn what we know, if indeed we do know any thing, [of him,] but by means of constant association with the individual concerned, and as the result of the earnest attachment which we cherish towards him. For they that love are acquainted, beyond all others, with the sentiments of the loved ones, as regarding them with a thoughtful and anxious concern. Of which remark an illustration may be seen in what the same blessed one saith to the Philippians, *even as it is meet for me to think thus of you, because I have you in my heart, both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel.* Yea, and yourselves likewise, if you were disposed to apply with earnestness to this reading, would find that nought beside should be wanting to you. For true is the word of Christ, which saith, *Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.*

But as the majority of those that are here assembled are charged with the care of bringing up children, and have wives to attend to, and families to provide for,—and may not therefore be expected

to give themselves wholly to this labor;—stand, therefore, to receive at least what others have collected [for you,] and bestow as much attention on listening to what is read here, as you do on the gathering of money. For though it be scandalous to ask of you *only* so much, yet thankful may we be if you bestow that same itself.

For this is the source from which have originated our thousand ills,—ignorance of the Scriptures. Hence hath shot up the wide-spread pollution of heresies,—hence the wasted lives,—hence the fruitless labors. For as they who are destitute of this light, are unable to walk in a straight course, in the same way, they that see not the rays which beam forth from the Divine Scriptures, must needs fall into many errors, and that continually, seeing that they walk in darkness of the worst kind. Which that it may not be our case, let our eyes be open to the lamp of the apostle's preaching.

No XXI.

FROM S. CHRYSOSTOM'S EIGHTH HOMILY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. (CHAP. V.)—*Opp. Tom. xii. pp.* 88-91.

Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines;—that is, for the distinguishing of right and wrong. The taste of things eatable is determined by

the throat; but it is the soul that forms a judgment concerning opinions.

Let us then to receive a lesson here. You may not, upon hearing that a man is not a Greek, nor a Jew, come directly to the conclusion that he is a Christian, until you examine in all other quarters as well: seeing that both the Manichees and all other heresies have adopted this mask, with a view to deceiving, by such a course, the more simple-minded. But if we have the senses of our soul exercised for the discrimination of both good and evil, we shall have it in our power to detect such characters.

And how then do our senses become thus exercised? By constant hearing of the Scriptures; from experimental acquaintance with them. For when we expose the aberrations of those men, and you hear thereof to-day, and to-morrow, and infer that their ways are not good, you are put in possession of the whole;—you know all. And if you comprehend it not to-day, to-morrow you shall be able to do so. People, saith he, *who have their senses exercised.* You see that we must exercise our hearing faculty in listening, from time to time, to the divine communications, that we be not liable to be misled by the voice of the stranger.—*Exercised*, saith he, *for distinguishing*—That is, becoming experienced thereunto.

One, indeed, says that there is no resurrection. Another expects not any of the scenes of the world to

come. One speaks of a second God. Another attributes His origin to Mary. And see how plainly it was by running into extremes they have all fallen into these errors, some enlarging, others again understating matters. As, for instance, in the case of the first heresy of all, that of Marcion. It brought in a second God, such as existed not.—See there the enlarging. After that, the error of Sabellius, alleging that the Son, and the Father, and the Spirit were one Person. Then, that of Marcellus and Photinus, which also did propagate like views. Then, that of Paul of Samosata, stating that He derived His origin from Mary. Then that of the Manichees, newer still than all those. And subsequently to them all, that of Arius. Not to mention others.

But to this end have we received the faith in its simplicity, that we might not be obliged to occupy ourselves, and become perplexed, with examining into a thousand heresies: but that whatever sentiments any should attempt to put forth, either in the way of addition, or of diminution, such to regard as spurious. For as they who appoint for use regulated standards of measure, do not require people to study curiously a thousand systems of the kind, but rather direct them to adhere to that one which is assigned them;—so also as regards doctrines. But there is none willing to apply himself to the study of the Scriptures; for if we had so applied to it, not only should we not have been liable to fall victims to

deception, but we should moreover have brought deliverance to others who might have been deceived, and have rescued them from their dangers.—For the able soldier is not only competent to take care of his own safety, but also to protect the one that stands next, and secure him against injury from the enemy. But now are there some unable to tell even what the Scriptures are: and this, notwithstanding the wonderful economy employed by the Holy Ghost for the securing of their preservation.

To become sensible of God's unspeakable goodness to mankind, look back [a little. See Him] gifting with inspiration the blessed Moses,—engraving the Tables,—retaining him forty days on the Mount, and again as many more, for the communication of the Law. Afterwards he sent them prophets, who underwent a thousand afflictions. Then came war. [Their enemies] exterminated them all,—made cruel havoc of them. The Books were burned. Again imparted He the gift of Inspiration to another admirable person, to Ezra, I mean, that he might set them forth once more, collected from their ashes, and put together for use afresh. The next part of His economy was to order that they should be translated by the Seventy. They completed that work. Christ came. He receives those [Scriptures]. His apostles publish them forth among all men.

[Well:—] Christ performed signs and wonders. What then? After all those important arrange-

ments, the Apostles likewise wrote; [and,] as Paul hath said, *These things were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.* And Christ said, *Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.* And Paul again said, *By patience and consolation from the Scriptures may we have hope.* And again, *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable* [for us.] And, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.* And the Prophet saith, *In His Law will he exercise himself day and night.* And elsewhere again [it is said,] 'Be all thy converse in the Law of the Highest.' And again, *How sweet are thy words unto my throat.* He saith not, 'To my hearing,' but, *unto my throat.—Sweeter to my mouth than honey and the honeycomb.* And Moses saith, *In them shalt thou exercise thyself at all times, when thou standest up, or sittest down, or art lying on thy bed.* Therefore also wrote Paul unto Timothy, saying;—*In these be occupied, exercise thyself in them.* And a thousand [other such] sayings might one cite concerning them.

Yet still, after all, some there be who know not what the Scriptures are. And therefore is it that we find nothing proceed healthily, nothing successfully, with us. Were any one desirous to become acquainted with the art of war, it would be indispensable that he should study the rules which relate to military affairs. And if one were anxious to be possessed of a knowledge of navigation or archi-

tecture, or any other science, it would be [no less] necessary for him to study the principles on which they respectively depend. But here we may see people neglecting every thing of the kind: and that, where the science with which we are concerned is one that requires peculiar application in the learning of it.

For, that this is a qualification which requires teaching, hear the prophet saying, *Come, ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* The fear of God, then, doth certainly require teaching. Again he saith, *What man is he that loveth life,*—he means the life above there, adding presently, *Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Shun evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it.* Now, can you tell whose words are those? What prophet, or historical writer, or apostle, or evangelist, it was, that spake them? I doubt, not; saving a very few. And even these themselves, again, if we produce our testimony from a different place, will be found in the same position as the rest of you.

For see, I shall give you the very same statement, expressed in different words. *Wash you; make you clean; put away the wickedness of your souls from before mine eyes:* [*cease to do evil:*] *learn to do well: seek judgment. Learn to do well.* See you how virtue requires teaching. For the one indeed saith, *I will teach you the fear of the Lord;*

and the other, *Learn to do well.* Know you, then, where these exhortations are to be found? I doubt not, excepting a few.

And yet, twice or thrice every week are these [lessons] read among you, and when the reader comes up, he tells first, whose the book is;—of such a Prophet, or Apostle, or Evangelist, as the case may be: so as to make the subject the more intelligible to you, and that you should not merely be acquainted with the contents, but also with the occasion whereupon they were written, and by what author. But all in vain. All to no purpose. Men's whole diligence is exhausted on the concerns of this life; while of spiritual things they make no account.

For this reason it is, that not even in those temporal affairs, do matters turn out according to your mind. Christ's word biddeth you to *Seek first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.* He hath given you to understand, that such objects would be granted you in the way of an addition. But we have inverted the order, and seek the earth, and the good things which are of the earth; as though those others should then be given us by way of addition to our store. Therefore have we neither these nor those. Let us however at last awake, and be animated by an earnest zeal for the good things that shall be hereafter. For so shall the others also follow. For it is impossible

but that he who seeks the things which are of God, shall be supplied also with such as are suitable for man's condition here. It is the sentence of the truth itself which contains the statement.

May we then follow no other course, but hold fast by the counsel which Christ hath given us, that we lose not our all. It is God, however, that can touch our hearts, and bring us to a better state, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, be Glory, Might, Honor, and Adoration, now and ever, world without end. Amen.

No. XXII.

FROM ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S FIRST DISCOURSE ON LAZARUS.—*Opp. Tom.* 1. *p.* 719.

When thou hast eaten and drunk, take heed to thyself, lest thou forget the Lord thy God.—So apt is luxury to lead the way to forgetfulness. Bear thou therefore in mind, beloved, when sitting at table, that after the meal thou wilt have to pray. And satisfy the demands of appetite with such moderation, as not to overload thyself, nor be disabled from bending the knee, and calling upon God.

See you not the beasts of burden, how they, after having fed, pursue their journeys, and carry their loads, and fulfil their appointed tasks. But you,

when you have taken your meal, become useless and unserviceable for work of any kind. And how then can you but be regarded as reducing yourself to a lower level than the very ass.—How? Because at that season, above all others, ought you to be watchful and sober. For the season after your meal is a season for thanksgiving. And he that is occupied in acts of thanksgiving should not be stupid from excess, but watchful and sober. We should, when the meal is over, turn, not to our couches, but to prayer; that we be not more senseless than the senseless brutes themselves.

I know that many will condemn what I am saying, as a strange and novel system to propose, relative to the habits of our lives. But I shall prove that the evil habits which at present prevail among us, are more strongly to be condemned. For, that it is not sleep, nor the bed, that should succeed to food and meal time, but prayer and the reading of the Divine Scriptures, Christ himself plainly shewed, on that occasion, where, after having provided for the immense multitudes in the desert, he did not afterwards send them to lie down and sleep, but invited them to the hearing of the Oracles of God. For he had not overloaded their stomachs, nor exposed them to the temptation of drinking to excess. But having satisfied their necessity, he led them to look after spiritual sustenance. So also let us do, and accustom ourselves to use only so much food as is

proper for supporting life, and not for surfeiting and stupefying. For it was not unto this end we came into the world, and have been endowed with life, that we should eat and drink. But to this end do we eat, that we may live. For living was not at first ordained with a view to eating, but eating with a view to living.

No. XXIII.

FROM THE FOURTH DISCOURSE ON LAZARUS.—*p.* 755, *d*.

If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they hear, though one should arise from the dead. That this is true, that if one hears not the Scriptures, neither will he listen to the dead, should they rise again, was proved in the case of the Jews;—who when they heard not Moses and the Prophets, were not led a whit more to believe, on seeing the dead rise again; but, at one time, sought to slay Lazarus, at another time, assaulted the apostles, even though many had risen from the dead at the time of the crucifying.

But that you may see from other grounds also, that the teaching of the Prophets is more entitled to credit, than the word which might be brought us by the risen dead,—keep this in view, that every one that is dead is but a servant; but whatever the Scriptures tell us, it is the Master that hath told us

that. So that even should a dead one rise,—even should an angel descend from heaven, the authority of the Scriptures must be held superior to all. For it is the Master of the angels, and the Lord, both of the dead and the living, whose laws are set forth in them.

[N.B. The matter of this No. is nearly identical (saving a few trifling variations,) with what the same writer has given in his commentary on Galat. 1. 8.— *Opp. Tom.* x. *p.* 670.]

No XXIV.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH HOMILY ON ST. JOHN.—*Opp. Tom. viii. p.* 211.

GREAT are the benefits derivable from the Divine Scriptures, and very copious the improvement which they communicate. In testimony whereof Paul also said, *whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, upon whom the ends of the ages have met, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* The Divine Oracles are indeed a treasury of medicines of all kinds, so that whether you have occasion for a cure for distraction, or to quiet inordinate desire, or to trample on the love of money, or to become insensible to pain, or to acquire courage, and be armed with fortitude;—*there* is the place whence one may derive all that is needed for the purpose.

No XXV.

HOMILY OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM, (WHILE YET A PRESBYTER,) BEFORE THE PEOPLE OF ANTIOCH, ON THE WORDS OF 1 TIM. v. 23.—*Opp. Tom. ii. p. 2.*

Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities. We have to-day been instructed concerning the obedience due from servants,—and the madness of the avaricious,—and the vain-glory of the rich,—and many other topics. Seeing therefore that it is impossible to go through them all, which will you, beloved, of the matters thus spoken of, that we should make the subject of our discourse to you on the present occasion? For many and various, as in a meadow, are the flowers that I can observe in the lesson which has been read to us;—many the rose-bush, and many the violets, nor less numerous the lilies than they;—aye, scattered too on every side, in diversified abundance, the fruits of the Spirit, and sweet the fragrance of their odours. Or rather, it is no mere meadow, but even a paradise, [that one finds in] the reading of the Divine Scriptures. For it is not bare perfume only, that these flowers yield, but fruit also, adapted for nourishing the soul.

Which, then, of the sayings [that you have heard,] would you have us bring before you to-day? Would you like that we should take up the one which appears the most unimportant of all, and one

easy enough to be completely understood by any common persons? I, at least, am inclined to select thus; and you, I well know, will agree with me in approving of the selection. And which of those sayings, then, is of a more trivial character than any beside? Which, but that one, that to any ordinary person appears a simple sentence and easily said? And which is *it*? *Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and for thine often infirmities.*

Come then, let us spend our whole discourse upon this [one] saying. We do so, not from ostentatious motives, nor from any anxiety to exhibit a proof of our ability in speaking; for the words which we utter are not our own, but such as the grace of the Spirit may inspire. But our aim is, to stir up those hearers who incline to be listless, and persuade them how great a treasure the Scriptures contain, and that the practice of treating them with neglect is not safe, nor unattended with peril. For if a mere saying of this kind, so simple in its character, and that seems to most people to have nothing of necessary importance involved in it, prove capable of affording us a foundation for much gain, and principles of the most exalted philosophy, much more will those other passages, which display, even of themselve, their native richness, communicate their priceless treasures to such as will [but] apply themselves to the study of them.

Let us not, then, pass carelessly by, even those

sayings of the Scriptures, which are commonly looked upon as of little moment. For of the grace communicated by the Spirit have even these had their origin: and the grace of the Spirit is never trifling and valueless, but great, and admirable, and worthy of the munificence of the Giver. Let us not then be listless hearers, seeing that even they who smelt the metallic ore, do not, after having cast it into the melting pot, gather out merely the larger pieces of gold, but do also with accurate care collect even the very small grains. Since then we too have to smelt the gold ore which we gather from the apostolic mines,—not casting it into a melting vessel, but submitting it to your spiritual consideration,—not raising flames, but kindling the Spirit's fire, to act upon it,—let us gather up with accuracy even the minute fragments. For though brief the saying, yet mighty is its power. Just as the value of pearls consists not in any vastness of bulk, but in the beauty of the article, so also is it with the reading of the Divine Scriptures. For the instruction of the world without, abounding as it does with folly, and teeming with empty trifling, sends the hearers away with empty hands, and without having received any real benefit, great or small.—Not so, however, the grace of the Spirit, which, on the contrary, in small expressions, conveys unto those who pay a due attention, a whole system of philosophy. And it often suffices to take thence a single saying, in order to have something worth carrying with us all our lives.

No. XXVI.

FROM ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S FOURTH HOMILY ON REPENTANCE AND PRAYER.—*Opp. Tom. ii. pp.* 302, 303.

WHEREVER shepherds observe the grass incline to a luxurious growth, there they are sure to make a place of oft repeated resort for their sheep, never bringing them from it, until all the herbage has been cropped away by their flocks. It is in imitation of them, that we ourselves also would now, this fourth day, feed the flock here present with the doctrine which explains the nature of repentance. Nor are we preparing, even to-day, to leave that ground; as we see still remaining a copious abundance of pasturage,—much that is adapted alike to gratify and to improve. For not so delightful to the sheep is the refreshment afforded them by the foliage of the trees, that answers for a roof to shelter the flocks in the meridian heat of day, relieving them with its pleasant and healthful shade, and lulling them sweetly to grateful rest,—as is the reading of the Divine Scriptures to pain-stricken and sorrow-worn souls, from its power to assuage the vehemence and fiery intensity of their sufferings, and the solace, sweeter and more soothing than any summer-shade, which it imparts. For it is not merely in losses of a pecuniary character,—or bereavement of one's children,—or in any other such troubles,—but also in

circumstances of distress on account of sins committed, that it supplies us with strong consolation.

For where a man has had an encounter with sin, and has tripped up, and fallen,—and conscience then keeps gnawing at him,—and, continually mindful of the transgressions he has been guilty of, he wears himself out with excess of despondency, and is consuming, as though by fire, from day to day,—and when a thousand people offer consolation, and he is unable to receive it from them,—[yet] when he comes into church, and hears that many of the saints, after having fallen, rose again, and recovered their former good report, he receives, before leaving the spot, unseen consolation.

And to *men*, indeed, we frequently cannot endure even to tell what we have done amiss, feeling too much confusion and shame to allow us to do so. And if we even do make the disclosure, we shall not thereby gain any such great advantage. But when God administers consolation, and touches our hearts, then shall all the sorrow that is of Satan soon be dissipated. And therefore is it that the falls of the just are written down for us; that both such as walk uprightly, and such as commit sin, may thence derive benefits of the highest importance. For the sinner falls not into despondency and hopelessness, when he sees another that has fallen, enabled to rise again. And he that worketh righteousness shall be made more diligent and secure. For when he

sees that many far better than himself have fallen, the dread of their fall inspires him with discretion, he becomes anxiously on his guard on every side, and exhibits much carefulness in looking to the safety of his own position. Thus [doth benefit result to] both;—to the man that pursues uprightly the path of virtue, and to the sinner rescued from despondency: the one, enabled to stand safely; the other, to recover speedily the position from which he had fallen.

And when man offers us consolation in our sorrow, and we seem cheered up for a little time, we fall back again into the same state of heaviness. But where God encourages us by the example of others that had sinned, and who repented and were saved, he displays before us His own goodness [in this way] that we may not have doubts concerning our salvation, when provided with grounds of consolation so unquestionable and secure. Whether therefore in circumstances of sins committed, or where dangers assault us, the old historical narratives of the Scriptures contain an efficacious medicine for all the afflicted who are willing to apply to them. And whether it be confiscation of property, or molestation from false accusers, or imprisonment, or stripes, or whatever other calamity, that may befal us,—by looking to the cases of the just who have undergone the same sufferings, and borne them with fortitude, we shall soon come to ourselves again. In the case

of bodily ailments, indeed, to look at those who are suffering from them aggravates the disorder of an invalid; or even communicates it, where not previously existing; as some have contracted eye-diseases, from looking at others that were affected with them. Not such, however, but quite opposite, is the case, when the ailment affects the soul. For there, the contemplating others who have been subjected to the same sufferings, lightens the depression which we feel on account of our own troubles.

Therefore did Paul also comfort in this way those that believed, adducing before them the examples, not only of living saints, but likewise of them that were dead. For in his instructions to the Hebrews, who were ready to stumble and fall, he brings forward the cases of those holy ones, Daniel, the Three Children, Elias, Elisha, with this observation, *They stopped the mouths of lions,—quenched the violence of fire,—escaped the edge of the sword,—were stoned, —had experience of mockings and scourgings,—yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment,—they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins,—destitute, afflicted, maltreated; of whom the world was not worthy.* Association in suffering is a source of comfort to the afflicted. And as in bearing of any calamity alone, one has to endure the ill unsoftened by consolation, so even the meeting with another who has been involved in the same troubles, has [of itself]

some power to diminish the weight of our stroke [of sorrow.]

That we may not then be cast down by any circumstances which are of a character to cause us trouble, let us give our attention carefully to the narratives contained in the Scriptures. For from them shall we derive much to sustain us, receiving consolation, not merely from our fellowship with others who have suffered the same ills, but also from learning the method of obtaining deliverance from the troubles which oppress us. And so shall we be able, after having attained to quiet, to abide, once more, in the same condition, and escape from either falling away into a state of carelessness, or being lifted up with arrogance.

No. XXVII.

END OF THE SERMON OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM ON THE WORDS *Saul yet breathing out, &c.* ACTS IX. 1. (AND *On the Changing of names in the Scriptures.*)—*Opp. Tom. iii. p.* 107.

IN the Old Testament also, we find Abraham at first called Abram, and afterwards, Abraam. And Jacob at one time called Jacob, and afterwards again, called Israel. And Sarah called at first, Sarai, and then Sarah. This altering of names is a subject

adapted to afford us much matter for investigation. I fear however that were I to open suddenly the springs of so many rivers, the effect might be, to drown the lesson of instruction. For as in a field that has a spring beneath, wherever any one may dig in any part of it, the waters are sure to burst up,—so, likewise, in the field of the Divine Scriptures, at whatever place you make your opening, you may see numerous rivers issuing forth. So that there is no little occasion to dread the effects of letting all [that are now within reach] flow forth at one gush to-day.

Here, then, we shall shut off the water of our own rivulet, and send you, beloved, to the Sacred Fountain of these Councillors and Instructors,—to that pure, and salubrious, and sweet stream, that issues forth from the Spiritual Rock itself. Prepare we, therefore, our minds for the reception of that instruction, for quaffing those spiritual streams, that they may become in us *a fountain of water, springing up unto life everlasting.* Of which may it be granted us all to be partakers, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom, and with Whom, to the Father, and, with them, to the Holy and Quickening Spirit, be Glory, Honour, Might, now and for ever, and throughout all ages.—Amen.

No. XXVIII.

FROM ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S SERMON, NO. IV., ON THE WORDS, *Paul called, &c.*, 1 COR. i. 1, (AND ON THE CHANGING OF NAMES, *continued*)—*Opp. Tom. iii. p.* 130, (*urging the necessity of attendance on Divine Worship.*)

AS the land which enjoys not the benefit of the husbandman's hand, turns to a waste and wilderness; so, likewise, the soul that enjoys not the benefit of spiritual instruction, produces thorns and briars. And if we, that are daily listening to the Prophets and Apostles, can scarcely restrain our passions, scarcely bridle our anger, scarcely subdue concupiscence, scarcely get rid of the taint of envy,—if, although constantly employing for the relief of our infirmities, the charms which are supplied us in the Divine Scriptures, we can scarcely keep in check those audacious monsters of prey,—what hope of salvation, tell me, have they, who never make use of such medicines, nor give ear to the philosophy which proceedeth from God? Would that I could exhibit before your eyes [the condition of] their souls; and you should see them, nasty, dirty, filthy, and degraded, and marked with shame. For as people's bodies, when deprived of the benefit of the bath, become all full of dirt and filth, so also, the soul, deprived of spiritual instruction, becomes mottled over with many a brand of sin. And our exercises here form a spiritual bath, which, sub-

jected to the warming of the Spirit, removes every uncleanness. Or rather, it is not merely the uncleanness [itself,] but even the colour of it, which the fire of the Spirit removes. For saith He, *though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow.*

No. XXIX.

FROM THE SAME SERMON.—p. 132.

Paul, called to be an apostle. These are words that *you* have heard, and *we* read, many a time. But reading is not enough. We must also study what we read. Otherwise we shall have no advantage from the reading. For a treasure [buried in the earth] doth not exhibit its contents on being merely walked over. People must first dig the place open, and go deep down, and in this way secure the whole amount. So, likewise, in the case of the Scriptures, the bare reading sufficeth not for bringing to light all the treasure of good stored up in them, unless you follow deep your searching after it. If the reading were enough, Philip would not have said to the Eunuch, *Understandest thou what thou readest?* If the reading were enough, Christ would not have said to the Jews, *Search the*

*Scriptures.** He that *searches* does not stay his work at the surface. And even in the opening passages [of the different books of the Bible,] I can see a great flood of thoughts [presented to our observation.]

No. XXX.

COMMENCEMENT OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S HOMILY ON THE WORDS, *Salute Prisca and Aquila, &c.* ROM. xvi. 3.—*Opp. Tom. iii. pp.* 172, 173.

I SUPPOSE that many of you are surprised to find such a passage as this among our apostolic Lessons, or rather, that you look on it as an unimportant and superfluous part of the Epistle, as consisting merely of a continued series of successive Salutations. It is on this account, that, after having had my thoughts turned to another subject for to-day, I have set *it* aside, and arranged to select the one before us instead: so that you may have an opportunity of learning, that in the Divine Scriptures there is nothing needless, nothing unimportant; no, not so much as a single jot, or a single tittle;—but even a bare salutation expands before us a wide sea of reflections. Though why do I say, a bare salutation,

* Some have thought that the words of our Blessed Lord, which are here quoted, might have been translated, "*Ye search* the Scriptures." But it is worthy of note, that Chrysostom, who spoke the original language, never takes them in that way, nor seems to think them capable of being understood otherwise than as a command.

seeing that the mere addition of one letter, has often involved a whole host of ideas;—as we may observe in the case of the name *Abraam*.

For it is not unreasonable, that when one receives a communication from an acquaintance, he is not content with reading the body of the letter merely, but [must examine] also the address appended to it, and even form from *it*, in particular, his conjectures relative to the disposition of the writer;—but where Paul has written, or rather, where, not Paul, but the Grace of the Spirit, hath addressed an epistle to a whole city and people of such great consequence, and through them to the whole world, that men should look upon any portion of the contents as redundant, and run over it inattentively, without considering that it is such a manner of proceeding, that has turned matters wholly upside down?

By this, too, have the heresies been introduced,—by our unwillingness to go through the whole body,—by our conceiving that there is any part redundant or superfluous. It is from this idea that we have been led to spend our whole diligence on other pursuits, not such as are superfluous merely, but such as are unprofitable and mischievous: while acquaintance with the Scriptures is disregarded and despised.

Those people, however, that are wild after our horse-racing exhibitions, are ready to tell with all possible exactness, the names, and herd, and breed,

and native place, and all about the training, of the several horses there, and how many years old they are, and their powers on the course, and which one should be yoked with which, to carry off the victory.* And what horse, if started from such a post, and ridden by such a jockey, shall take the lead on the course, and distance his opponent. But we, if asked 'How many, and what, are the Epistles of Paul?' are not prepared to tell even their number. Or should there possibly be some who know the *number*,—yet, were they again to be asked, 'What cities were they that received epistles?' the question were one, to which it would puzzle them to give a reply.†

He that was a Eunuch, and a barbarian, pressed by a thousand cares, consequent on a thousand matters of business, was so devotedly attached to his Bible, as to be unable to rest from studying it, even during the time of a journey; but must, while sitting in his chariot, apply himself with close attention to the reading of the Divine Scriptures. But we, whose engagements bear no kind of proportion, in their urgency, to his, are strangers, even to the names of the Epistles; and this, though gathering, as we do, here, each Lord's day, and having the advantage of listening to the reading of these Divine Lessons.‡

* *i. e.* in the chariot-race, with two horses to each vehicle.

† See the *Note* at the end of this book.

‡ See this case more fully commented on at pp. 21, 31, &c. sup.

Not, however, to occupy our whole discourse in the language of reproof, let us now draw your attention to the salutation itself, which has this appearance of being no more than a redundancy and encumbrance, &c. &c.

No. XXXI.

FROM THE THIRD HOMILY OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM ON THE WORDS, *We having the same Spirit, &c.* (2 COR. iv. 13.)—*Opp. Tom. iii. pp.* 279, 280.

WHERE one phrase has afforded us matter for three days' discourses, what a treasure would an entire section, carefully examined, expose to view! Let us not, then, relax in our diligence, until we have gathered in the whole. For if the diggers in gold mines, how much treasure soever they have extracted from any particular spot, still never cease working there, until they have exhausted all its gold,—much more should we employ far greater diligence and activity, in our search into the Divine Oracles. For we too are diggers, though not of palpable, yet of spiritual gold; our labour being applied, not to the mines of the earth, but to the mines of the Spirit.

Yes, the Epistles of Paul are mines of the Spirit. Mines, and fountains. Mines,—because they supply us with a treasure more precious than any gold; and fountains,—because they never fail; but how

much soever you extract from them, as much, yea far more, flows in again. And for a plain testimony to the truth of this, we may refer to all the time that has elapsed since the day when Paul flourished. Since then, some 500 years have passed away.* And during all that interval, many commentators, and many teachers and expositors, have again and again, drawn largely on those repositories: yet have they not exhausted the riches therein stored up. For the treasure extracted is not of a material kind: and for this reason, it is not consumed by the multitude of hands employed in digging at it; but still doth increase and multiply. And why speak I of those that have lived before our time? How many shall tell the same tale after us, and others after them again;—yet shall not the wealth cease to flow, nor the mines be exhausted; for they are of a spiritual nature, and incapable of coming to an end.

No. XXXII.

FROM ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S HOMILY ON THE ARREST OF EUTROPIUS, AND ON THE VANITY OF RICHES.—*ib. p.* 386.

PLEASANT is the meadow, and pleasant is the gar-

* In this place Chrysostom speaks not accurately. But the way of reckoning by the year of our Lord was not introduced until long after his time; which makes it less wonderful that an error of the sort should occur in his writings.

den; but far more pleasant still, the reading of the Divine Scriptures. For there, indeed, you have the flowers that bloom to die;—but here, thoughts born to live. There, the Zephyr blows;—but here, we have the breathing of the Spirit. There, you hear the chirping of the grasshoppers;—but here, the melodies of the Prophets. There, pleasure is enjoyed in the seeing; here, profit, in the reading. The garden is confined to one place;—but the Scriptures are in all parts of the world. The garden is subject to the inevitable influences of the seasons;—but the Scriptures, both in winter and in summer, are beautiful in their foliage, abundant in their fruit.

Pay we, then, diligent attention to the reading of the Scriptures. For if you will thus attend to them, they are what will banish your sorrows, supply you with a source of pleasure, eradicate vice, implant virtue,—and leave you no longer exposed to suffer, in the storms of the world, the fate of the shipwrecked mariner. The sea may be raging wildly around, yet still shall you ride [safe on, as] in a calm. For you have your pilot, in the reading of the Scriptures. Yea, it shall be to you a cable, in which the world, with all its troubles and its trials, shall never be able to effect a breach.

NOTE

Referred to in No. xxx., *p.* 103.

Persons accustomed to an intimate acquaintance with the Bible from their youth, may be surprised at the amount of ignorance of its contents attributed, here, and in other places, by St. Chrysostom, to a large portion of his flock, notwithstanding the zealous and persevering efforts which he himself employed, for their instruction in the Sacred Oracles. Such a state of things is not, however, without a parallel in much more recent times: as may be seen from the following instance, connected with a period more than a thousand years later than the age in which he lived.

When the more zealous Reformers, after the confusion and ignorance of religion prevalent in the reign of Henry VIII. and earlier times, began to set earnestly about the extension of Scriptural knowledge in these countries, the condition of matters which they had then to deal with, may be in some degree estimated from the specimen exhibited in the following curious record relating to the subject, as illustrated in one diocese of England.

Report of a Catechetical Examination in Gloucester Cathedral, held May 4, *A.D.* 1551.

"The Examination of the Dean and Prebendaries, and other ministers ministering in the Cathedral Church of Gloucester, as also of all and singular the Prebendaries, Rectors, Vicars, and other ministers ministering in the whole Diocese of Gloucester, or in any part thereof, held and made by the Reverend Father in Christ, John Hooper, Bishop (under the royal authority) of the said diocese of Gloucester, at his ordinary visitation, opened on the 4th day of the month of May, in the year of our Lord, 1551, and in the fifth Year of the Reign of the Most Illustrious Prince, our Lord Edward the Sixth, by the

Grace of God, King of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and supreme head on earth, under Christ, of the Church of England and Ireland.

"Articles wherein all the ministers were examined, viz. The Commandments given to Moses by God, in the 20th of Exodus, the Articles of the Belief, and the Petitions of Christ's prayer.

"*Of the Ten Commandments.*

The Parts
1. First, how many of God's Commandments there be?
2. Secondly, Where they be written?
3. Thirdly, Whether they can say them off book?

"*Of the Christian Faith.*

The Parts
1. First, Which be the Articles of the Christian Faith?
2. Secondly, Whether they be able to say them off book?
3. Thirdly, Whether they can prove them from Scriptures?

"*Of the Lord's Prayer.*

The Parts
1. First, Whether they be able to say, off book, the Petitions of Christ's prayer?
2. Secondly, How they know it to be the Lord's prayer?
3. Thirdly, Where it is written?

[Here follow the Examinations of three hundred and eleven of the clergy, one hundred and sixty-eight of whom were unable to repeat the Ten Commandments, thirty-one of that number being unable to state in what part of the Scriptures they were to be found. There were forty who could not tell where the Lord's Prayer was written, and thirty-one of this number ignorant who was its author.]"

(From the "*Later writings of Bishop Hooper*," Parker Society, Cambridge, 1852, pp. 150, 151.

FINIS.

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